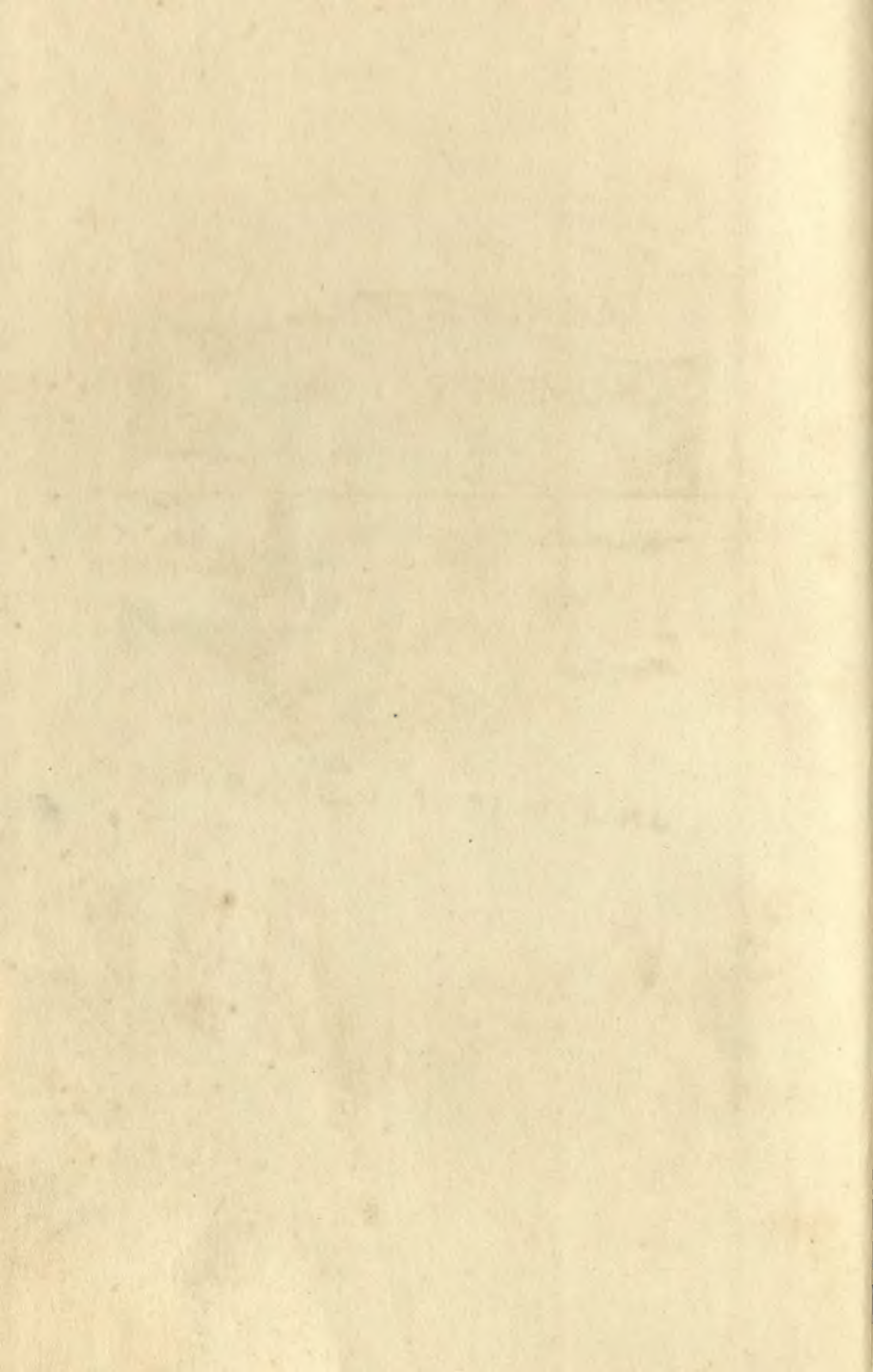


UNITED STATES OF AMERICA





COUNTY SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATION

EXPLORATION SERIES IN EDUCATION

Under the Advisory Editorship of

JOHN GUY FOWLKES

County School Administration

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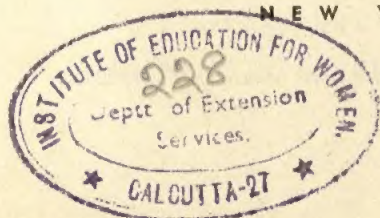
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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

The "county" has long served as an intermediate unit in the administration of public education. The county superintendent of schools has served as the liaison officer between the state department of public instruction and local school districts. The county superintendent has also served, and is now serving, as the educational administrator of a large number of relatively small school districts.

Widespread reorganization of local school units—including administrative units, attendance units, and fiscal units—during recent years has inevitably made a sharp impact upon the county and the county superintendent of schools. There are those who believe that the need for a county superintendent no longer prevails. There are some who are inclined to perpetuate the county superintendent of schools on a *status quo* basis.

In light of the three centuries of experience in public education which this nation has enjoyed it seems clear that an intermediate administrative unit, and hence an intermediate administrative officer, is necessary to the realization of a universally functional and effective educational program. Therefore, it seems that rather than abolishing the post of county superintendent of schools—and creating another new intermediate educational administrative post—it would be far better to strengthen and if necessary to modify it, either by reducing or expanding the present administrative responsibility of the post of county superintendent of schools. It is apparent that the county as an intermediate administrative unit and the county superintendent of schools are, and will continue to be, important factors in the planning and administration of our educational program.

Professional, effective service by a county superintendent of schools demands thorough and extensive scholarship, coupled with high and

diversified skill in working with people. Some of the specific requirements for a good county superintendent of schools are as follows:

1. An intimate familiarity with the nature of the county as a political and sociological structure.
2. An understanding of unique functions of the county and the county superintendent of schools.
3. The recognition of the educational program of other public agencies and organizations.
4. Skill in the qualities essential for the exertion of leadership with respect both to professional educators and nonprofessional workers.
5. Marked competency in affairs of operational management.

This book presents the sociology, philosophy, and practice of public school administration. It is idealistic and still "down to earth." This volume will serve well both as a reservoir of inspiration and a manual of daily operation. It will prove highly valuable not only to practicing county superintendents of schools but to all school administrators. It will also be of marked interest and value to all who are working toward a more effective program of public education.

J. G. F.

P R E F A C E

This is a general study of principles and practices of organization and administrative control of public school education at the county and intermediate district level. It views administrative organization as a social device created by the people in the several states through their legislative assemblies for bringing together educational resources and facilitating their use for educational purposes. It is intended to serve as a guide—but not necessarily as a pattern to be followed indiscriminately—to those people who have the responsibility of determining educational policy and shaping the changing structure of administrative organization at the county level of school administration. It seeks to bring into the foreground of educational thinking a concept of school administration that is sound and practicable and that bears a proper relationship to other agencies and institutions of community life.

The county superintendency in the structure of American public education is as old as the city superintendency. In the development of the school systems in the different states, some form of county school administration was provided in most states concurrently with or soon after the establishment of the state superintendency. With the many adaptations which have occurred over the years in the organization and administration of state school systems the county superintendency, or some form of administrative position corresponding closely to it, has persisted. It is not too much to say that the county superintendency is firmly embedded in the administrative structure of American public education.

The attention county school administration has received in educational literature is by no means proportionate to its importance in the organization and operation of public schools. Students interested in this aspect of school administration are more impressed with the paucity of carefully reported research and well-organized discussion of principles

and procedures than with worth-while materials available. This area of educational literature has been sorely neglected.

Widespread efforts in recent years to improve educational opportunities in rural areas has directed an increasing amount of attention to county school administration. Many of the essential services demanded for adequate programs of elementary and secondary education cannot be provided efficiently and on an economically sound basis in sparsely settled rural areas, even after small local units of school administration have been reorganized into larger community districts. More capable leadership is required to identify and define educational needs and to interpret them in terms of a functioning educational program in a social scene that is rapidly becoming more and more complex. State departments of education are placing greater responsibility on county school administrators for collecting and compiling information essential to the operation of the schools. Planning and operating the instructional programs in the schools so that maximum advantages can be secured from the services of the many municipal, county, state, and federal agencies in the fields of health, conservation, public welfare, and law enforcement demand a quality of educational leadership that only a strong and well-organized unit of county school administration can provide.

People in many states are critically studying the character of their county school administration and consistently moving toward strengthening it. Evidence of this trend is indicated by the creation of county school committees charged with the responsibility of initiating and directing the reorganization of local school districts, establishment of county boards of education with policy-forming functions, provision for making the county superintendent an appointive rather than an elective official, making the county the unit of taxation for school support, and legalizing new items of expenditure in countywide school budgets. In twelve states the county has become the predominating local unit of school administration, and as local school district reorganization progresses, an increasing number of county units are appearing in other states.

This book is designed particularly for county superintendents and members of their professional staffs, members of state departments of

education, and professors of school administration in colleges and universities. An attempt has been made to develop the content in simple, straightforward language so that it will be useful to school boards, parent-teacher associations, farm organizations, and other organized lay groups. This book is addressed to the people who have responsibility for gradually shaping this area of administrative organization and giving direction to its operation. An educational program that meets the need of people in rural America will be provided only when the educational leaders and lay citizens envision it, want it, and combine their resources and efforts in getting it.

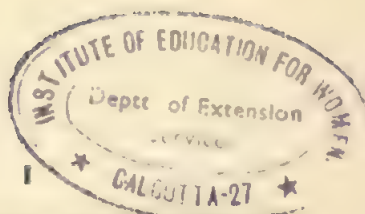
S. C.
C. O. F.

October, 1953



COUNTY SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATION





The American County

The county is the most universal pattern of local government in the United States. From ocean to ocean and border to border, the vast surface of this nation's 3 million square miles is overlaid by the 3070 counties that have been established by the forty-eight states. Everywhere, except for tiny Rhode Island where the county exists only as a geographic area, this characteristic pattern of local self-rule operates to some degree in the daily lives of American people.

Although the influence of the county varies from region to region and even within states, almost everywhere rural people are strongly county-minded. Over the years it has become much more to them than a political unit for determining and administering the limited governmental functions suited to the simple agrarian economy of the past. New functions have been added; new services in keeping with changing social and economic conditions have made their appearance. Coincident with this development has come an increasingly frequent use of the county as the area for participation in a wide variety of voluntary associations, both social and economic in nature. So strong have been these influences that in a large sense the history of a county is the history of the progress of rural people.

Considered collectively, the 3070 American counties encompass within their borders all the complexities of life characteristic of our culture. The variations in customs, in folkways and mores, in levels and standards of living, in social problems and issues, run the gamut of

American life. However, all these diversities by no means account for the varying influence of the county in the lives of people. On the contrary, they accentuate its adaptability as a pattern for democratic action.

Spanish-speaking people in a Southwest county, wresting a bare subsistence from wind-eroded, semidesert grasslands, flock to the polls to establish a soil conservation district. A Maryland county, until lately agrarian in economy but now engulfed with waves of people spilling from the nation's capital, strives to attune its service functions to new demands. People in a West Virginia mining county, ever ready for rumblings of labor discord, explore possibilities for establishing more stable job opportunities to bring greater stability to the local economic structure. Concerned with the lack of wholesome ways for spending leisure time, a group of people in upstate New York establish a county recreational program for children, youths, and adults. In a Southern county where cotton has long been king, the people develop a school program which comes directly to grips with improving the quality of living.

The range of problems that may be attacked is almost as broad as the panorama of our social and economic life. The traditional bonds enclosing the narrow range of functions inherited from the past have been broken. The American people, schooled in local self-rule, have altered and are continuing to adapt one of their oldest governmental institutions to the demands of changing conditions. The lack of widespread uniformity in population size and physical characteristics highlights the accomplishments the people have achieved through countywide action.

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE COUNTY

Many factors have influenced the number of counties established in the forty-eight states. The period of settlement, size of the state, density of population, and topographic conditions have in varying degrees been determining influences. The number per state ranges from three in Delaware to 254 in Texas (Figure 1). However, except in the smaller Eastern states, there is little relationship between the number of counties and state size. This low relationship is largely due to the eleven

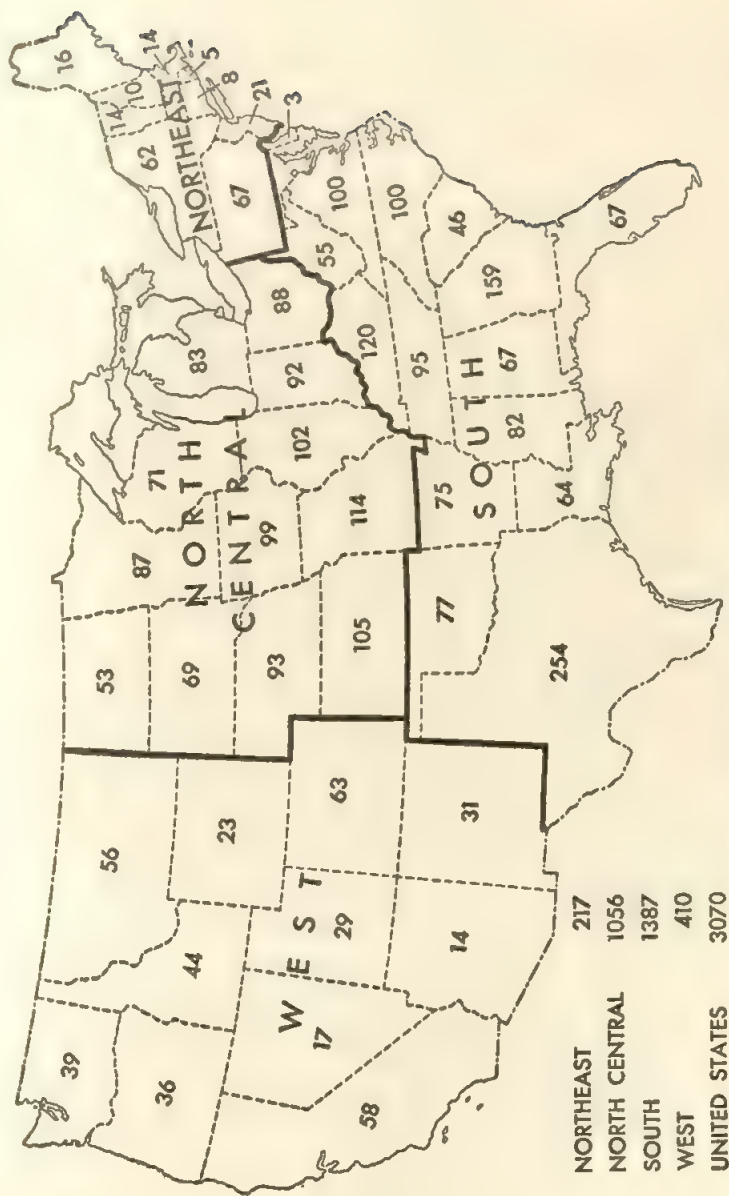


Figure 1. Distribution of Counties in the United States.

states in the Western region which, having almost two-fifths of the total area of the country, have but 13 percent of the counties. The 410 counties in this region average 2897 square miles in area. This is more than four times the average in the other three regions of the country (Table 1).

TABLE 1. Distribution of Total Area, Number, and Size of Counties, by Regions^a

Region	Percentage of Total		Average County Area in Square Miles
	Area	Counties	
Northeast	5.6	7.1	785
North Central	25.3	34.4	725
South	29.8	45.2	649
West	39.3	13.3	2897
Total	100.0	100.0	984

^a Derived from Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1949*, pp. 3, 391.

Some counties are larger in area than many states; others are smaller than many townships. The largest county, San Bernardino in California, is over 800 times larger than the smallest, Arlington County, Virginia, which has an area of twenty-four square miles. The former, having an area of 20,135 square miles, is larger than New Jersey, Delaware, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts combined. There are fifty-nine counties each larger than Connecticut. At the other extreme, there are twenty-one which have less than 100 square miles.

Notwithstanding the great extremes in area, almost half the nation's counties range between 500 and 1000 square miles (Table 2). Al-

TABLE 2. Percentage Distribution of Counties by Size of Area and by Regions^a

United States and Regions	Percentage of Counties Having Areas			Total
	Less Than 500 Square Miles	Between 500 and 1000 Square Miles	Over 1000 Square Miles	
United States	32.4	46.3	21.3	100.0
Northeast	32.7	50.3	17.0	100.0
North Central	30.5	56.4	13.1	100.0
South	41.9	47.8	10.3	100.0
West	5.6	14.7	79.7	100.0

^a Derived from Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940.

though nearly a third of the total number have less than 500 square miles, only Delaware, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, and New Jersey have state averages of less than 400 square miles. However, over two-fifths of all counties in the Southern region are less than 500 square miles in area.

DIVERSITY IN POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

Even the most casual observer on a transcontinental trip quickly notes how predominantly rural are the vast areas of the nation. Soon after boarding an airplane at a metropolitan airport the great city is lost from sight while below mile after mile of open country rolls by, dotted here and there by hamlets, villages, and small cities. The plane wings its way over hill and valley, flat plains and high mountains; across forests and grasslands, small farms and wide ranches; over river lowlands and high semidesert plateaus. The most striking characteristic of this panorama, even more striking than its almost endless variety, is how uncrowded the land appears and how infinitesimal cities seem in comparison to the distances between them.

Even the land in harvest crops is relatively insignificant in the total pattern. A full two-fifths of the land is not in farms of any type. Almost a third is in forest. The acreage of grazing land is more than double that in crops.

Nearly 6 million farms dot the landscape, providing homes for over 27 million people. Over 32 millions more live in the hamlets and villages. Well over half (58.4 percent) the nation's 145 million people live in the 3464 centers above 2500 population. The density of population for the entire country is 44.2 persons per square mile.¹

GROWTH IN URBANIZATION

The present distribution of the nation's people in the cities and on the land reflects a long-time trend, influenced by industrialization, science, and technology, toward concentration in large centers with ever decreasing proportions of the total population living in less crowded places.

When the first census was taken in 1790 the 4 million population

¹ Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1949, pp. 10, 12, 34.

was almost entirely rural; there were but twenty-four centers having more than 2500 persons and only five of these had over 10,000. A century later, when the total population had increased slightly over 16-fold, the urban population had increased 105-fold. By 1920 there were as many urban people as rural. In 1950 the 4284 urban places, designated by the Census Bureau, had a total population of more than 88 million as compared with a rural population of less than 62 million. Over half of the urban population lived in 106 cities having populations of 100,000 or more each.²

However, the ruralness of the nation is frequently underestimated because of the persistent and rapid growth in urbanization. Even though the number of people in urban centers has increased tremendously, the urban population is very largely concentrated in a relatively few centers. By the same token a great majority of American counties are either predominantly rural or completely so.

Small Proportion of Metropolitan Counties. According to the 1950 Census, there were 168 metropolitan districts in this country. Such a district has been defined as a densely populated area having at least one city of 50,000 or above (some districts have two or more) and including all adjacent and contiguous territory having 150 or more persons per square mile. Counties classified as metropolitan either have one or more cities of 50,000 or above or have half of their population living where the density is at least 150 persons per square mile.

A study of 233 metropolitan counties made by the United States Department of Agriculture in 1944 showed that this 8 percent of the total number of counties had at that time slightly over half the nation's population (Figure 2). This included more than three-fourths of all urban people in the country. They also had 30 percent of the rural nonfarm and 10 percent of the rural population.³

There were wide regional variations. In the South they constituted less than 5 percent of the total number of counties but had over 28 percent of the population. At the other extreme, almost a third of Northeast counties were metropolitan. These had four-fifths the total

² Bureau of the Census, *Population of Urban Places: April 1, 1950*, Series PC-9, No. 8, November 26, 1952.

³ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *County Classification by Size of Largest City*, October, 1944.

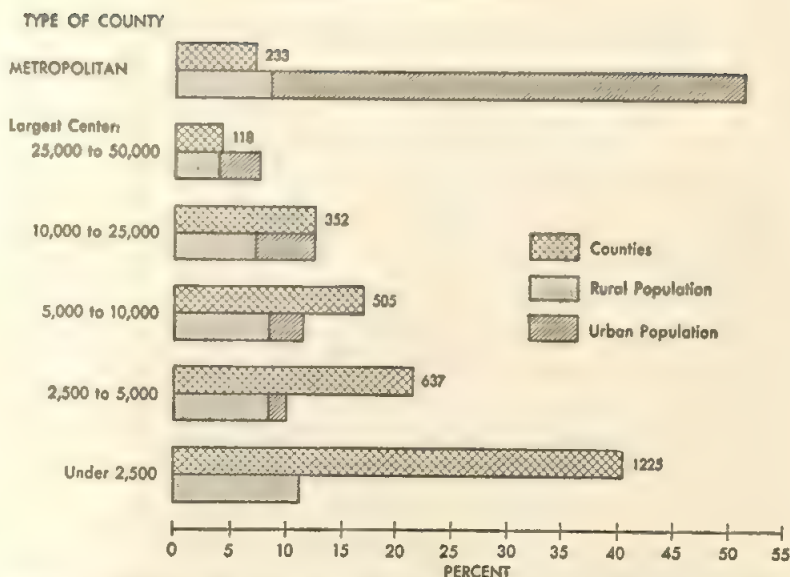


Figure 2. Percentage Distribution of Population and Number of Counties by Size of Largest Population Center in Each County.

population of the region and a fifth of the total for the entire country. In the North Central and the West regions approximately half the population lived in metropolitan counties.

RURAL COUNTIES PREDOMINATE

An indication of the rurality of the 92 percent of American counties that are not metropolitan in character is revealed by classifying them according to the size of the largest population center in each (See Figure 2 and Table 3).

Almost two-fifths in 1940 did not have any urban centers within their borders. In an additional fifth (637 counties) the largest center in each was between 2,500 and 5,000 persons. Half the counties in these two classifications were in the South. A third of each group were in the North Central states, with the largest proportions in the western part of that region.

In over 500 other counties the largest city was between 5,000 and 10,000 population. Thus, over three-fourths of all counties had no

TABLE 3. Regional Distribution of Counties Classified by Size of Largest Population Center in 1940^a

Counties by Size of Largest Center	United States and Regions									
	United States		Northeast		North Central		South		West	
	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent
All counties	3070	100.0	217	100.0	1056	100.0	1387	100.0	410	100.0
Metropolitan ^b	233	7.6	70	32.3	71	6.7	68	4.9	24	5.8
Largest place										
25,000 to 50,000	118	3.8	19	8.7	47	4.5	37	2.7	15	3.7
10,000 to 25,000	352	11.5	47	21.7	127	12.0	132	9.5	46	11.2
5,000 to 10,000	505	16.5	42	19.3	195	18.5	210	15.1	58	14.1
2,500 to 5,000	637	20.7	21	9.7	210	19.9	325	23.4	81	19.8
Under 2,500	1225	39.9	18	8.3	406	38.4	615	44.4	186	45.4

^a U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *County Classification by Size of Largest City*, October, 1944.

^b Counties that either have at least one city of 50,000 or larger or have half or more of their total population living where the density is 150 or more persons per square mile.

city above 10,000 persons. Undoubtedly, many had more than one small city within their borders. However, so far as national totals were concerned, they were predominantly rural. Even those having cities between 10,000 and 25,000 had a total of twice as many rural people as urban. This last-mentioned group added to the other more rural classes of counties gives a total of 2,719, more than seven-eighths of all counties in the country. They had 42 percent of the total population, only 18 percent of the urban, but 84 percent of the rural farm and 61 percent of the rural nonfarm population.

EARLY ESTABLISHMENT AND GROWTH

In a very real sense, our counties have grown up with the nation. Transplanted in the early Atlantic seaboard colonies from England, their origin dates back to the ninth century when the English kingdom was established. The first county organization in this country came in 1634 when the colony of Virginia, growing in population and settled area, was divided into eight shires or counties. By the time of the American Revolution all of the colonies except Georgia and Rhode Island had established county governments.⁴

⁴ John A. Fairlie and Charles M. Knier, *County Government and Administration*, The Century Company, New York, 1930, pp. 1-23.

DEVELOPMENT IN THE COLONIES

In this early period the functions of the county varied greatly. In Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the Carolinas it became the primary unit of local government. As the population spread out beyond original settlements, counties were organized for such purposes as establishment of courts, assessment and levy of property taxes, law enforcement, recording of property deeds and grants, organization of militia, and the representation in the colonial assembly.

Although the town system early predominated in New York and the New England colonies, counties were organized by Massachusetts in 1643 as judicial and militia districts. Soon other functions were added, including equalization of taxes among towns, fiscal affairs, and recording of deeds. The system developed by Massachusetts spread. In this early period Connecticut created the office of county attorney to prosecute criminal offenders, thereby establishing a county office later adopted in all states. New York early established county boards of supervisors and Pennsylvania provided for county commissioners, setting a pattern for the rest of the country.⁵

As the colonies grew and pushed back the frontiers, new counties were organized. There the people were more democratic than the merchants and plantation owners in the older counties who usually controlled the colonial assembly. Pennsylvania colony was dominated by Quakers from counties around Philadelphia who refused to grant proportional representation in the colonial assembly and protection against the Indians to the western counties. "For God's sake," exclaimed a westerner, "are we always to be slaves, must we groan forever beneath the yoke of three Quaker counties; are we ever to bleed by the hatchet of an enemy that we feed and cloath?" But despite efforts to prevent the growth of equal rights and protection under the law, the county became a most important means for securing those rights.

STATEHOOD AND GROWTH TO THE WEST

When the Republic was established, most of the state constitutions contained provisions for county government and in none of the states

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-20.

was the county system abandoned. The county system was established in Kentucky before its separation from the mother state. Territorial governments in the Northwest Territory established the county system and in Kansas the boundaries of thirty-three counties were established by the first territorial legislature. In the Great Plains and the Far West organization of new counties by the territorial governments kept apace with the advance of the population westward. By 1870 the total area of the nation, except for lands included in Indian territory and reservations, had been divided into counties.⁶

INFLUENCE OF THE ECONOMY ON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT

In New England and New York early settlements were compact village-centered communities with a high degree of solidarity. Town boundary lines tended to conform to those of the natural community. The development of manufacturing and trade tended to strengthen this community cohesiveness.

After the Revolutionary War people from this area moved in great numbers to the Northwest Territory in search of cheap land and better economic opportunity. Wherever they settled they established their old institutions, including the town (or township). However, the newly established townships never became as strong as the New England towns. Their boundaries were laid out along geographic lines which frequently did not coincide with the natural community. Moreover, the township lacked the compactness of the New England towns. The economy in the new region was almost entirely agricultural and farmers, instead of living in the hamlets and villages as in New England, lived on scattered farmsteads.

At the same time the county grew stronger in the new regions. Pioneers pushing westward from the Middle Atlantic states brought strong loyalties for the county system. Migrating from states where industry was poorly developed and the population was scattered on the land, instead of clustered in village centers, the county system was predominant with them. The county-township system resulting from the intermingling of the New England and the Middle Atlantic people

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-35.

was later extended to Michigan, Wisconsin, and across the Mississippi River to Iowa, Minnesota, and Kansas.

South of the Ohio River the county system predominated. Settled by pioneers from the Middle and South Atlantic states in search of cheap land and escape from limited economic opportunities and political restrictions of the older states, the county became the channel for securing these rights and opportunities.

An Avenue for Democratic Political Action. During the colonial and early statehood periods, political power was frequently concentrated in the hands of wealthy merchants and landed gentry. The suffrage was restricted by property ownership and other requirements. The prevailing method of selecting county officials was appointment by the state. Many state and national leaders feared and opposed more democratic practices.

The migratory waves of the propertyless and the poorer classes westward brought close in their wake a new upsurge for better representative government. The suffrage was steadily extended to include all whites; property restrictions were eliminated. New states provided for election of county officers. The county became the basis for representation in the legislature and the principal unit for local participation in the rising political party organizations.

The tide of Western democracy swept eastward and brought profound changes in the county governments of older states. Here, too, the county became the unit for expression of "grass-roots" democracy. Political party rallies and county party organization, campaigns on county issues, election of county officials and representatives to the state legislature—all these helped to create a strong county consciousness.

Thus, the pattern was set for practices which today remain deeply encrusted in custom. Even now it is extremely difficult to break away from the election of some county officials who should be appointed on the basis of professional competence.

INFLUENCE ON THE EARLY RURAL STRUCTURE

The pattern of settlements was greatly influenced by topographic features of the land, with the heaviest concentrations of people along

the rivers and streams and in their valleys. Trading centers arose at convenient locations—the confluence of two streams, a ferrying place, or a portage. These centers with their stocks of goods and frontier services became the link between the East and the local people. They drew most heavily from the surrounding area limited by the “team-haul”—the distance a farmer could drive his team to town and return on the same day.

However, the county-seat town had a big advantage in drawing power. The various governmental functions located at the county seat drew people from the entire county area and enhanced its value as a trade and service center. Some of the most bitterly fought contests occurred among villages and towns over the location of county seats. Several years before Lincoln’s birth in Hardin County, Kentucky, the people of Hodgenville and Elizabethtown clashed over the location of the county seat; hard feelings and election-day fights between the two groups continued for a decade. Across the Ohio the same struggle took place in county after county. Springfield, soon to become the political scene of action for Lincoln, won over another village as the county seat. Even in this early period it grew rapidly as a social and economic center for the county.

Springfield with its 1,500 inhabitants in 1837 was the big town of Sangamon County, selling to the 18,000 people of the county a large part of their supplies, tools, groceries, handling grain, pork, beef, and produce, with stores, churches, schools, banks, newspapers, courts, lawyers, offices of government, taverns, saloons, places of entertainment. It was a city, its people ready to say there was no more wilderness in that part of the country; the land had been surveyed and allotted.

The farm women who came to town wore shoes where they used to go barefooted; the men had changed from moccasins to rawhide boots and shoes . . . it was cheaper and quicker to raise corn and buy pantaloons which had come from Massachusetts over the Ohio or the Mississippi River or the Great Lakes.⁷

CORPORATE AND GOVERNMENTAL FUNCTIONS

Everywhere in the nation counties have been established by state action, sometimes directly by state constitutions but most frequently

⁷ Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln, The Prairie Years*, Vol. 1, Harcourt Brace and Company, New York, 1926, p. 215.

by the legislature. In their relationships to the state, counties have no inherent rights or residual powers as do the states in their relation to the federal government. However, the powers of the legislature over counties are most usually restricted by constitutional provisions which serve to prevent their abolishment. Thus, even though functioning in important ways as organs of local government, in a legal sense counties are subdivisions of the state.

CORPORATE STATUS

Corporations, both private and municipal, are chartered by the state with the assent of the persons directly concerned and for their own purposes. Most counties, on the other hand, have been created without reference to local consent or joint action by county people. The bodies of statutes relating to the corporate existence of counties are not contained in a charter enacted during one legislative session but are widely scattered in state codes, frequently with new provisions being added every time the legislature meets.⁸ Although counties are recognized as municipal corporations by some states, in most they are held to be only *quasi-corporations* just as school districts and townships are so considered.

Although counties as quasi-corporations may enter into contracts and exercise property rights (within limitations set by the state), sue and be sued, their liability is generally more strictly limited than is the case with municipal corporations. Fairlie and Knier⁹ point out that the courts have generally held that counties are not liable for torts but in certain classes of cases a number of states have statutes holding counties liable. In most states they may be sued for breach of contract.

The corporate powers of counties are not as great as those of cities. Limitations on tax rates are common as well as limits on indebtedness that may be incurred. Moreover, most states not only specify the officials that a county must have but also prescribe the amount and method of their compensation.

⁸ For example, the New York State legislature has during every year since 1892 enacted important laws relating to county government. See O. H. White, *Receipts and Expenditures of Rural New York Counties*, Cornell University, Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, New York, 1940, Bulletin 729, p. 18.

⁹ Fairlie and Knier, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-54.

GOVERNMENTAL FUNCTIONS OVERSHADOW CORPORATE POWERS

Counties operate governmentally in a twofold capacity: as the local unit for administering state functions, and as a self-governing body carrying out functions determined locally. The first capacity is by far the most important, particularly so if the optional functions supported by state and national grants-in-aid are considered.

The degree to which counties function in carrying out responsibilities of the state to its citizens is frequently underestimated or discounted, especially by critics who complain that the county is the "dark continent of American politics." Disregarding for the moment the weaknesses of county government, and there are many, examination of its administrative and regulatory activities reveals its basic strength as the local governing arm of the state.

JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS

The county is one of the important keystones in the state structure of judicial processes. Everywhere, even in New England, the county seat has a courthouse where one or more types of court are held. There is always a court of general jurisdiction, most frequently called a district, circuit, or superior court, with the judge often serving courts in more than one county. Other types include probate, juvenile, and special civil and criminal courts.¹⁰

The work of courts convening in the county courthouse is conducted by a number of officials, most elective and many having duties additional to those in the courts. Twenty states have elective county judges who preside over county trial courts. Nineteen states have elective probate court judges who appoint guardians for orphans, supervise the settlement of estates, and probate wills. Often the probate judge also presides over the juvenile court or of an inferior trial court. Both county and probate judges frequently have other important administrative duties.

All states provide for an official attorney, most usually designated as the prosecuting attorney, district attorney, state's attorney, or solicitor,

¹⁰ The information in this section has been largely drawn from Paul W. Wager, *County Government Across the Nation*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1950.

who conducts criminal prosecutions in trial courts. Some serve courts in more than one county. Those serving a single county usually function as legal advisors to the county board of supervisors and other county officials. The general trial court always has an official resident clerk for issuing process documents and other official papers and to keep the records of the court.

County coroners are court officials responsible for examining deaths of mysterious circumstances to determine whether crime has been committed. Though the position is most usually filled by untrained elective officials, in a few states the office has been supplanted by an appointive medical examiner.

The sheriff, the most universal of all county officers, is both a court official and law-enforcement officer in many states, although the latter duty has become of little or no importance in some areas. Responsible for the custody of prisoners, he or one of his deputies serves as jailor and is the chief police officer in the county courts.

Considered collectively, the courts in which these officials function are the courts of origin for almost all important lawsuits and for prosecution of serious criminal offenses. They are also courts of appeal for minor civil actions and misdemeanor cases originating in the lower courts. In them, wills are probated, guardians are appointed, estates are administered, and juvenile cases are heard. Through county courts the states assist the federal government in the naturalization of aliens, millions of whom have taken their citizenship examinations before county judges.

CIVIL AND FISCAL FUNCTIONS

As a recording agency the county administers state responsibility for guaranteeing civil and property rights of its citizens. Most of the important documents concerning these rights are kept on record in the county courthouse. These include property deeds, plots of land surveys, mortgages, leases; and records of births, deaths, and marriages.¹¹

Almost everywhere except New England, public finance administration is an important function. Counties operate as agencies for collection of a number of types of state revenue and for the issuance of vari-

¹¹ *Ibid.*

ous licenses and permits. Property tax administration, including assessment, laying of levies, equalization of rates, and collection, is even more important both for county purposes and as assistance to townships and other districts. However, property tax administration is by no means a universal county function entirely. In several states assessment is a town or township function, although some, including Iowa and Nebraska, have recently transferred it from the township to the county.

Counties are commonly the local mechanism for operating election machinery. Voters are registered, candidates file their announcements, polling places and personnel to man them are selected, and election returns are canvassed both for state and county officers. So strong has the county become as an election district that it is the basic local unit of operation by political parties and the channel through which voters are reached by state and national organizations.

Although there is wide variation in the titles and duties of officials administering county civil and fiscal functions, a number of positions are common to all or most states. As mentioned earlier, all counties have a sheriff, a court clerk, judges and an attorney, each of whom may serve more than one county, and a coroner or medical examiner. In addition, a number of other officials are almost universally found.

Most states provide for a county clerk who typically is the principal recording officer and often the clerk to the board of county supervisors or commissioners. He is often the chief financial officer and in several states functions in many respects more as a county manager than a records clerk.

County treasurers are found in thirty-seven states. In many of them the treasurer collects county taxes in addition to maintaining custody of county funds. However, there is a marked movement to abolish the office and assign the duties of keeping financial records and accounts to the county clerk. There are sixteen states which have county auditors or comptrollers who typically function as the chief finance officer for the county. In seven of these states no provision is made for county clerks. Where both county auditors and clerks are provided, the former administers fiscal affairs and the latter takes care of records other than those relating to county finance.

County assessors are found in twenty-seven states and in thirty-one states there are provisions for a county surveyor or engineer.

THE COUNTY GOVERNING BODY

Practically all counties except those in some of the New England states have a governing board. In over 60 percent of the counties this board is called the county board of commissioners or county board of supervisors. In some Southern states it is called the county court; in Texas it is known as the commissioners' court; in Louisiana, as the parish police jury; in Kentucky, the fiscal court.¹²

In the past most county governing boards have had duties more of an administrative than policy-making nature. In recent years boards generally have acquired increased ordinance-making powers, but even with this additional power very few have become truly legislative bodies.

At present over 90 percent of county governing boards levy property taxes, appropriate money, and issue bonds. In most instances the county board exercises whatever corporate powers the county possesses, including management of county property, authorizing payment of claims and bills, awarding contracts, appointing certain officials, and exercising general supervision over county affairs. However, in extremely few instances does the county board have any marked control, either administrative or policy-making, over all county affairs.

In fact, there has been a widespread movement in recent years to reduce the already limited powers of county governing boards through the establishment of a variety of special boards or commissions, each responsible for a particular function, such as welfare, health, property assessment, and planning. Forty-five states have authorized special-function boards for a combined total of seventy-two different functions. Welfare, health, library, property assessment, and election boards have each been authorized by more than thirty states; hospital, highway, and planning boards each are authorized by more than twenty states; and recreation, agricultural, personnel, penal, and finance boards have each been authorized by nineteen, sixteen, fifteen, fourteen, and thirteen states, respectively.

¹² *Ibid.*

Provisions for establishing these collateral boards clearly show the changes which recent years have brought to county governmental functions. Although the service functions administered through the county will be considered later in some detail, it is pertinent here to indicate their importance within the total range of county governmental activity. More than half the increase in cost for county government operation during the present century came from service functions. By 1946, highways and public welfare services accounted for half the total operational costs while expenditures for general control, public safety, and correction constituted slightly more than a fourth (Table 4).

TABLE 4. Expenditures for Operation of County Governments in the United States for 1946^a

Item	Amount in Thousands	Percentage
General control	\$ 316,284	20.0
Public safety	64,054	4.1
Correction	40,364	2.6
Public welfare (public assistance and institutional care)	448,753	28.4
Highways	355,530	22.5
Health, hospitals, and sanitation	172,387	10.9
Schools	102,206	6.4
Libraries	6,050	0.4
Recreation	10,798	0.7
Natural resources	28,653	1.9
Miscellaneous and unallocable	32,810	2.1
Total	\$1,577,889	100.0

^a Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1949, p. 416.

In addition, newer functions such as conservation of natural resources, recreation, libraries, and sanitation services have become a part of county budgets. Although at present these do not constitute a significant proportion of the total cost of operation, they hold tremendous significance for the well-being of rural people throughout the country.

STRUCTURAL WEAKNESSES OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT

The growth in service and other functions and the increases in costs of providing them have not been accompanied by any general improve-

ment in the basic structural organization of county government. In fact, this structure has not been changed in any fundamental way since pioneer days.

Perhaps the most outstanding characteristic of the entire structure is its haphazardness. There is almost everywhere a complete disregard for the time-honored threefold division of governing powers with their accompanying systems of checks and balances. The nearest thing to a legislative branch is the county board which does legislate within a limited framework and for the purposes set by the state. This body also exercises many administrative functions. On the other hand there is rarely a single executive head. Such powers are usually scattered in a number of offices which function independently and without coördination. The system of courts functions as a part of the state judiciary system rather than as a coördinate branch of the county governing machinery.

The diffusion of responsibility seriously hampers the establishment of sound budgetary practices, financial accounting, and auditing as well as centralized purchasing. The effects of this are reflected by the fact that the percentage of county funds allocated for general control functions accounts for 20 percent of total operating costs, a proportion twice that allocated by states and cities.¹³

The elective system of selecting officials, adopted in pioneer days in reaction against the evils of appointment by state legislatures, continues to the present and typically includes technical, professional, and often clerical officials as well as those requiring no particular specialized competence. Thus, most counties still elect coroners without regard for professional competence even though the detection of death from criminal causes most frequently requires expert medical knowledge and skill. Equitable assessment of property in the county requires a thorough knowledge of the values of various classes of real property, a task beyond the majority of county assessors.

It is not surprising that all of these weaknesses, and others as well, have long been choice targets for political scientists and others interested in governmental reform. These people point out many defects, some of which are even more applicable to townships and may be

¹³ The Council of State Governments, *State-Local Relations*, the Council, Chicago, 1946, p. 75.

applied appropriately to city and state governments. A number of steps for improvement have been advocated, including adoption of a county manager plan or county home rule.

The Council of State Governments¹⁴ indicates that most of the defects are encysted in state constitutions which specify the officials to be elected and require a uniform structure without regard to county size or local wishes. Although thirteen states have authorized home rule as an optional form, a very small number of counties have changed their traditional structures.¹⁵

Moreover, the governmental structure that the small county must maintain has drawn severe criticism. It is frequently pointed out that such counties, established during the days of slow transportation when the "team-haul" distance was a prime determining factor of size, are at present smaller than modern conditions warrant. As a result the burden of their prescribed functions of government is proportionately heavier than in the larger, more populous counties.

Studies have been conducted in more than half the states, uniformly leading to the conclusion that higher quality of services could be provided at lower cost and with a more equitable distribution of tax burdens as the result of county consolidation. Emphasis on consolidation probably reached its zenith around 1930 when both townships and counties were exercising functions and attempting to provide services for which states have since assumed responsibility. Large-scale consolidations were proposed—a number of states were urged to reduce the number of their counties by as much as three-fourths; Kentucky was advised to consolidate its 120 counties into 20.¹⁶ Despite the activities of those working for consolidation, it has taken place in only two instances, involving a total of five counties.

There are a number of reasons why county consolidation in all probability will not take place. Although the Council of State Governments does urge states to encourage consolidation wherever possible, it also points out:

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 175–176.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

¹⁶ Lane W. Lancaster, *Government in Rural America*, The Van Nostrand Company, New York, 1937, p. 386.

Geographical considerations and unevenness of population density, especially in the mountain and southwestern states, make even the theoretical consolidation of counties less feasible than some enthusiastic reformers seem to believe. Furthermore, legal complications, political forces, and public sentiment have, in combination, proved almost insurmountable barriers to county consolidation.¹⁷

The Council, urging careful study before attempting to change the patterns of local government, cautions that more is involved than the provision of services at economical cost: "Local governments are primarily organs of democratic expression. The desires and the traditions of local citizens must have adequate expression, and this may involve acceptance of something less than the economic first choice in the process of reorganization."¹⁸

Moreover, counties are in actuality becoming stronger. A significant portion of the increase in strength is being gained at the expense of townships, except for the New England towns. These smaller units are being stripped of their most important functions—health, public welfare, and highway services. All indications point to township deterioration and that "they will increasingly wither from disuse." On the other hand, the Council concludes that even though the county does not always measure up to the ideal it may through integration with other rural units go far in that direction, and it "comes closest to meeting necessary standards of size, wealth, and population."¹⁹

A CHANNEL FOR ADMINISTERING STATE AND NATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICES

Paradoxical as it may seem, counties are becoming stronger as the result of the national and state governments taking responsibility for service functions earlier regarded as matters of local concern. Some of these were gathered up from townships and even the counties themselves; others, not being provided previously by any level of government, have come as the result of broadening and extending the concept of "promote the general welfare."

¹⁷ The Council of State Governments, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

Without exception this "gathering-up" process has brought broader and more comprehensive programs than the limited resources of the vast majority of local governments were able to provide. A comparison of public welfare and health services reaching rural people from all units of government in 1930 and at present indicates the magnitude of change. In addition, there are other services perhaps equally noteworthy. And it may well be that the end is not yet in sight, particularly so if further extensions of services already accepted as state and national functions are considered. Certainly all the evidence points toward further growth.

The gains in county strength have come as a by-product, not as any part of the overall purposes, of the services rendered. State and national governments, unable to reach the people directly in an effective way, chose the county as the local unit through which to channel their services. This choice was undoubtedly a matter of administrative convenience determined to some degree by earlier federal-state-local relationships. But, more important, the *county* had sufficient size to justify trained personnel administering the services from that level to communities and neighborhoods. And it was small enough to keep the people in close touch with service offerings.

In addition, the county already had strength as a pattern of association—politically, socially, and frequently in an economic sense. This is of prime importance because whatever the source of services, their ultimate effectiveness is in no small part determined by the degree to which people are able to work together on matters of local policy. And inevitably there are adaptations that must be made in programs in order to keep them attuned to local needs—adaptations which the local people should help decide.

The net result of state and national policy has brought a concentration of services administered through the county. Although this trend has had its greatest growth since 1930, it began before the so-called era of "big government." In fact, one of the most significant developments was initiated in 1914 by passage of the Smith-Lever Act providing for extending the services of land grant colleges and the United States Department of Agriculture to the nation's farm families.

THE COUNTY IS THE CRUCIAL UNIT

The Coöperative Agriculture and Home Economics Extension Service comprises the nation's largest adult education program reaching, according to estimates, over four-fifths of all farm families. Functioning in every state and practically every county, the program involves a time-tested and practical system of relationships: the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the state government and the land grant colleges of agriculture and home economics, counties, local communities and neighborhoods, farm families.

The keystone in this structure is the county, for it functions as the gateway through which services are channeled to the people by trained personnel. The key figure in the program is the county agricultural agent. In addition, about three-fourths of the counties have home demonstration agents. Several hundred have 4-H Club agents, although work with the boys and girls is usually carried on by the agricultural and home demonstration agents.

Extension Service is not a hand-out program to county people. They support it financially, in 1949 contributing slightly over one-fourth the total cost of the program.²⁰ Moreover, county people take an active part in shaping the program to their needs. A wide variety of devices are used to secure local participation in matters of policy and program formulation. Some form of county council is the most commonly used technique. The county agent carries on his work with smaller groups, usually natural community groups. On the other hand, home economics extension is usually organized on a neighborhood or community basis, with a county council composed of representatives of the local club meeting periodically to advise with the home demonstration agent in developing plans and policies. Boys' and girls' club work is typically carried on with the help of a county council of adults composed of representatives from the advisory committees serving neighborhood or community clubs.

Thus all three services appear to bear out the soundness of Kolb

²⁰ E. deS. Brunner and E. Hsin Pao Yang, *Rural America and the Extension Service*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1949, p. 202.

and Brunner's²¹ suggestion that while the sociological community is the best working unit for social services, the county is best for administering such service functions. Moreover, recent experience by the Extension Service in working with older rural youth indicates these young people were not interested in organization below the community level and "that from the start they developed county wide activities," involving both farm and rural nonfarm youth.

In evaluating the accomplishments of Extension Services, Brunner and Yang point out: "It is significant that throughout its history the adult education enterprise called Extension has enjoyed federal subsidy without federal control. . . . Neither federal nor state government forces the county to have both agricultural and home demonstration agents. . . . Sometimes the programs or projects are set on a state basis. More often and increasingly the county or even the community determines its own activities. Specialists and agents serve these local desires."²²

A FOCAL POINT FOR ADMINISTERING EXPANDED SERVICES TO FARMERS

National government action in coping with the economic depression of the 1930's ushered in a vast array of service programs mushrooming at the county level to assist distressed farmers. Time-honored interpretations of the meaning of "promote the general welfare" were challenged; court decisions reversed legislative and executive actions and, later still, reestablished their validity. Year by year agencies in the county grew—the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (later to become the Production and Marketing Administration), the Farm Security Administration (later becoming the Farmers Home Administration), the Farm Credit Administration, to name only the more important ones.

This was more than temporary depression-inspired action. A dramatic shift in national policy was firmly established and became a matter of long-range planning and action. Nor was attention confined to agricultural production, marketing, and finance. The Rural Electrifi-

²¹ J. H. Kolb and E. deS. Brunner, *A Study of Rural Society*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1940, pp. 628-631.

²² Brunner and Hsin Pao Yang, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

cation Administration was established to bring the benefits of electricity to farm home and shop. Other agencies followed.

Clouds of once fertile Western soil blew eastward to the nation's capital and beyond, leaving in their wake the great dust bowl and Grapes of Wrath communities. The shock brought realization that the nation's soil was rapidly dwindling and only farmers could save it. Through the Production and Marketing Administration county offices, farmers signed agreements and were paid for adopting certain soil-saving practices. Through the Soil Conservation Service almost three-fifths of the nation's 6 million farms were incorporated through co-operative agreements into soil-conservation districts. By 1946 over 3000 counties were involved, each with its own committee of representative citizens appointed to advise with Conservation Service technicians in formulating and gaining general acceptance of the programs.

In fact, practically all the agricultural service agencies are sponsored locally by committees of lay citizens. This policy, essential as it is in keeping services firmly embedded at the grass roots, inevitably has strengthened the county consciousness of those participating. It also strongly orients the people toward their county-seat towns where the services are centered.

The gains in strengthening farm life have been tremendous and services never before available to many rural people are now being provided. A good illustration is the broadened program of the Farmers Home Administration. That agency, serving farm families in the low-income group, found that these people could not be rehabilitated unless their health status was improved. Accordingly, a special medical care program was organized whereby eligible families (those participating in the rehabilitation program) organized county health associations, with the aid and advice of local physicians. During World War II associations operated in more than a thousand counties serving over 600,000 members of 114,000 farm families.²³

THE HUB FOR RURAL SOCIAL WELFARE WORK

In the county welfare department are centered not only the "poor relief" functions of earlier days but the new services inaugurated by

²³ Benson Y. Landis, *Rural Welfare Services*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1949, pp. 69-71.

national and state action during the 1930's. Until the great depression local units had borne almost the entire burden of governmental aid to the indigent. Then the federal government reversed historic policy by creating vast programs of public works, relief work projects, and direct assistance extended through the states into every county. During the darkest years one rural family in four drew benefits through one or more of the many different emergency programs established. Governmental spending and activity at the county level reached a pitch of giant proportions.

National emergency legislation gave birth to long-range permanent policy with passage of the Social Security Act in 1935. By the provisions of that act the national government withdrew from granting direct assistance, except through relief work programs, to the general needy. In place of general relief, a system of categorical aids was established—Aid to the Blind, Aid to Dependent Children, and Old Age Assistance—which guaranteed specified levels of federal support to states meeting standards of service required by the Act. More than three-fourths of the states have designated the county as the local unit for administering these categorical aids. In some others the program is administered on a multicounty basis.

Public assistance for the needy unable to qualify for categorical aids has been left to the states and counties. Almost everywhere the county is the administering unit. Moreover, it has become the center for other services associated with social welfare.

The concentration has become so great that the county welfare office has been described as "the nearest thing to a laboratory in social work." Landis reports one county department staffed by three persons providing seventeen different kinds of services. He points out that multiple service programs are characteristic of most counties. All the known methods of social work are involved, including casework, record maintenance, public relations, and general administration.²⁴

Such programs have for the first time brought into most counties the trained personnel required for effective work. Most are "general practitioners" because of the number of services to be administered. However, more than 500 counties have provided the services of child

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-30.

welfare specialists who, using the case-study approach and coöperating with related county and state agencies, bring the benefits of foster care, medical, and other services to neglected and homeless children in the county.²⁵ This is a service program needed in every county, and state child welfare agencies as well as local groups are encouraging its growth.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Long considered a matter of local concern, there has been a wholesale shift of health functions from township to county. County health departments employing a full-time medical officer were established in 1911; by 1930 a sixth of the counties had full-time units, a large portion of them concentrated in the Southeast. Then followed a remarkable period of growth. By 1942, under the stimulus of the Social Security Act, almost three-fifths of the nation's counties were covered by full-time units. Thus, in a twelve-year period the amount of spread (or cultural diffusion) had increased by more than 250 percent, a rate of growth far greater than that at which some educators claim social services are accepted. Nor can this growth be attributed to federal "handout," for in 1943-1944 less than 15 percent of the financial support for local health work came from federal sources.²⁶

Moreover, not only have the number of county units increased but their services are broader in scope. More than 2000 counties had public health nursing services in 1942. More than a thousand had monthly child health conferences conducted by physicians and almost 1400 reported health examinations for school children. Emphasis on maternal and infant care has brought prenatal, maternity, and well-baby clinics conducted by physicians and home visitation services by the public health nurse.²⁷ Sanitarians have been employed by a number of county health departments.

Through federal and state assistance, programs for disease prevention and control have been broadened. Under the supervision of state departments of health, clinics are held for prevention and control of

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

²⁶ Frederick A. Mott and Milton I. Roemer, *Rural Health and Medical Care*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1948, pp. 333-352.

²⁷ Landis, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-58.

venereal diseases, tuberculosis, and cancer. Mental health clinical services are being provided here and there in the more populous areas.

Although a number of states have enacted legislation permitting counties to establish hospitals, most of them have not taken advantage of it. In fact, the majority of counties are unable to bear the burden of establishing and maintaining a hospital without assistance. However, federal assistance is now available under the provisions of the Hospital Survey and Construction Act of 1946 which grants one-third the construction cost of local public hospitals and health centers meeting specified standards which are largely fixed by the states. Standards of size have been made sufficiently flexible to extend aid to sparsely settled counties. Plans have been worked out for twenty-five-bed units for sparsely settled service areas of approximately 15000 population.²⁸

OTHER COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES HAVE EMERGED

State and federal grants-in-aid for public health and welfare have been prime factors in making the county a service center for such benefits to rural people. Standards prescribed for scope and quality of services as prerequisite to receiving these grants-in-aid have had tremendous influence on the thinking of rural people with respect to county responsibility for the welfare of its citizens. No longer is maternal and infant care regarded as the complete responsibility of the individual family. Attitudes concerning public welfare services have also changed radically.

However, this change in thinking is not confined to public welfare and health services alone. The same forces and influences giving rise to an awareness of need for these services have also created demands for others. Thus, while state and national agencies have encouraged counties, financially and otherwise, to extend their service functions, county people have been doing the same thing.

One of the strongest influences moving county people in this direction is the decrease in rural isolation. Some of the most significant trends in rural life show the increasing similarity of rural and urban people in their patterns of association, in their levels and standards of

²⁸ The Council of State Governments, *Federal Grants in Aid*, the Council, Chicago, 1949, pp. 187-188.

living, and in their use of the goods and services made possible through modern science and technology. Changes such as these have not only influenced rural family and neighborhood life profoundly; they have also created demands for services that city governments provide. As a result rural people are seeking out new ways for providing similar services through their county government.

RURAL LIBRARIES

Library service is a good example. The average village library with its small stock of books, untrained personnel, and two-or-three-day-a-week service is unable alone to provide the quality of service needed by villagers. Moreover, such libraries rarely serve people living in the open country. But a county library system can overcome these deficiencies. With a well-stocked central library located at the county seat and staffed with trained personnel, books are sent to all villages and neighborhoods in the county. Thus, the village library has its stock of books increased greatly; depositories for the benefit of open-country people are established at crossroads stores or hamlet post offices; book-mobiles may be used to maintain frequent interchange between the central depository and its branches; and the interlibrary loan system brings the vast resources of state and university libraries into farm and village homes. The system varies among counties, but at present some form of county library organization is operating in nearly 500 counties scattered in thirty-seven states.

RURAL RECREATIONAL SERVICES

Increases in the amount of leisure time available to rural people and their changes in attitude concerning recreational activities are adding new functions to county government. The growth in commercialized, spectator types of entertainment that have so largely replaced the distinctive patterns characteristic of rural neighborhood life has brought demands for better types—activities that will give opportunity for more wholesome participation. Many villages have gone far in providing better programs, but they usually are limited in resources and in the scope of their activities. As a result the county is becoming increasingly important for providing the services needed.

Recognition of the value of camping experiences for rural boys and girls has resulted in the establishment of hundreds of county 4-H Club camps. These are commonly kept open a major portion of the year and are used by a wide variety of organizations representing all age groups—youth groups, women's clubs, church recreation groups, and special-interest groups.

County parks are another recent development. Although park systems were first developed in the more populous counties, the movement has extended to many rural counties. In some states land unfit for agriculture has been converted into county parks and recreation areas and is administered by a county park board or commission. Sanderson²⁹ reports that county park systems in some of the Mid-western states maintain chains of outdoor swimming pools with adjacent sports facilities scattered throughout the county.

A number of counties have constructed recreational-center buildings with accompanying facilities for outdoor activities. In some instances buildings were constructed as war memorials; in others they were provided as federal public works projects during the 1930's.

A number of agencies have been influential in encouraging better county recreational services. For example, the WPA of the 1930's organized recreational programs in many states and in one, New Hampshire, was instrumental in providing trained county leaders. The Extension Services have assisted hundreds of counties in establishing programs, training leaders, and in providing facilities.

There has been a marked growth in the number of counties establishing park or recreational commissions as a part of county government. Many of these employ trained personnel and are increasing the scope of their activities. Moreover, the movement is spreading. In 1949 the State of Washington authorized counties to establish park boards and provided for schools and counties to pool their recreational budgets and facilities. Wisconsin authorized counties to establish park commissions or rural planning boards and to employ county recreation directors.³⁰

²⁹ Dwight Sanderson, *Rural Sociology and Rural Social Organization*, John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1942, p. 584.

³⁰ *National Municipal Review*, The National Municipal League, May, 1949, and October, 1949.

A PATTERN FOR PARTICIPATION IN VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

One of the most distinctive elements in the American cultural pattern is the number and variety of organizations through which the people take political, social, and economic action. That keen observer of our ways, De Tocqueville,³¹ saw in our penchant for social organizations a basic support for the democratic way of life and its adaptation to broadened purposes and interests.

Rural life has not always been complex in structure. In fact, one of the major distinguishing characteristics of the neighborhood, until recent years the strongest unit beyond the family in rural social organizations, was its very simple and almost completely informal structure. But with rapid transportation and communication the degree of social self-sufficiency of the neighborhood is rapidly giving way to the larger, more impersonal rural community, typically village-centered.

The larger unit of social participation is more complex and continues to become increasingly so. It caters to broad and varied types of specialized interests, in which open-country people participate more and more frequently. As many as forty to fifty organizations maintained by farm and village people of a single community are not at all uncommon. So great is the variation in their group interests that Kolb and Brunner found fourteen different categories of groups in the agricultural villages they studied.³²

Complex and varied as formal group activity may be in the local community, it is not in itself sufficient for the organizational needs of rural people. Participation beyond community boundaries is taking on added importance, particularly on a countywide basis.

Some counties are in themselves natural communities, as will be indicated later. Even where they are not so constituted, they nevertheless serve as an important unit of social participation for many voluntary organizational activities of rural people. This may occur even where a number of factors operate *against* a strong county consciousness. For example, Goodhue County, Minnesota,³³ contained a number

³¹ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Vol. II, The Colonial Press, New York, 1899, p. 114.

³² J. H. Kolb and E. deS. Brunner, *A Study of Rural Society*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1946, pp. 555-567.

³³ Frank D. Alexander and Lowry Nelson, *Rural Social Organization in Goodhue*

of influences militating against strong county consciousness, including location of the county seat on the county border, poor highway communication between outlying districts and the county seat, and a number of village-centered communities whose socioeconomic boundaries cut across county lines. But, despite these divisive factors, Goodhue County had twenty-four countywide organizations. These groups constituted one of the important influences contributing to county consciousness. This county is by no means exceptional, neither in the number of county organizations nor in their influence on developing feelings of county belongingness.

A UNIT FOR FEDERATION OF LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Most formally organized community groups federate at the county level. Local parent-teacher associations, affiliated with the state and national PTA Congress, commonly establish councils composed of all the locals in the county. Subordinate granges, the basic local unit of the National Grange, are organized into Pomono Granges which typically are organized on a countywide basis. Women's groups, the 4-H Clubs, and others joint at the county level to unify their efforts and to accomplish goals which individual clubs working alone could not achieve.

The advantages of county federation of such groups is clearly shown by their accomplishments. Community recreation groups unite their efforts by means of a county council and, working with county officials, develop a program of activities impossible for a single community working alone to provide. Neighborhood and community 4-H Clubs in the county come together for camping, achievement days, and other activities. The county League of Women Voters undertakes a countywide campaign to clean up politics and to get out the vote. The PTA Council may undertake a countywide program for encouraging greater lay participation in school affairs, county tax-supported youth recreation programs, or, as described by Landis,⁸⁴ arousing public support resulting in employment of a child welfare worker by the county.

County, Minnesota, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, February, 1949, Bullerin 401, p. 9.

⁸⁴ Landis, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

Such federations of local groups are not the only organizations that function on a countywide basis, however. A significant number of rural organizations use the county as the basic unit of operation. Two of these groups will now be examined in some detail.

THE COUNTY FARM BUREAU

The Farm Bureau was originally organized as a county advisory group to assist the extension services in carrying on their work. In its early stages of development it was an educational organization, but later extended its sphere of activity to economic and political matters. As a result, organic connections with extension services were greatly weakened or completely cut in all but seven states.⁸⁵ The basic unit of Farm Bureau organization today is the county and the unit of membership is the family. However, in some states county units may be subdivided into township or community locals for carrying on certain phases of the overall program.

As an educational, political-action, and economic organization, it wields a powerful influence. The educational programs of the extension services are strongly supported and some county organizations employ an agricultural advisor to supplement the work of the county agent. As a political-action group influence is brought to bear through the state and national federations. Strong emphasis is given to development of purchasing and marketing coöperatives. Many of these are operated by county associations. In fact, many county farm bureaus function similarly to a modern, well-organized business enterprise.

Illinois furnishes an outstanding example. In that state over 70 percent of the county associations own their own buildings. These structures house a large number of facilities and services—the various offices, a soil-testing laboratory, and storage space for the numerous products sold by the County Producers Supply Company, a subsidiary of the county association. Warehouses and gasoline bulk plants, complete with delivery service trucks, are owned and operated by the association. Through this county service center, members sell the products of their farms and buy many of their goods and services, including various types of insurance. Associated with the economic services are

⁸⁵ Brunner and Yang, *op. cit.*, pp. 65–72.

others such as soil, crop, and animal improvement programs, sports and recreation, rural youth educational services, and a monthly publication featuring the various services and activities available to members.⁸⁶

THE COUNTY RED CROSS CHAPTER

The association of rural people with the American Red Cross is maintained through local units which usually cover a single county. The county chapter is responsible for the activities and services of the national organization within the county. Each chapter has a representative lay board. A large majority of the county field workers are volunteers, both in fund-raising campaigns and in carrying on the home-service activities within the county.

However, the Red Cross has exerted a powerful influence through its paid workers in improving rural social services. It was one of the pioneers in providing public health nursing services to rural counties. In 1932 more than a thousand county chapters had nursing services, but as county health departments became stronger this function wherever possible was turned over to them. It has been said that "Red Cross nurses have driven their cars over the back roads of half the counties of the United States."⁸⁷

The importance of the county chapter in bringing to bear the resources of the national organization on local problems can hardly be overestimated. Disaster relief, services to local families with a member in the armed services, courses in first aid and water safety, establishing highway and mobile first-aid stations, conducting courses in home nursing—these are some of the services rural people secure through their county chapter.

WIDE RANGE OF INTERESTS SERVED

In years past the Farm Bureau and to a lesser extent the Red Cross both exhibited a characteristic common to other countywide groups. Such groups, instead of dealing with a single area of interest, provided the means for pursuing a number of related though different interest

⁸⁶ O. M. Kile, *The Farm Bureau Through Three Decades*, The Waverley Press, Baltimore, 1948, pp. 373-380.

⁸⁷ Landis, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-68.

fields. It might be added that most of the older and well-established community organizations had the same tendency. This may have been a holdover from earlier periods when the rural community was not highly organized and most groups were generalized in their functions rather than specialized. Whatever the causes, the tendency still exists with some groups.

However, in recent decades there has been a strong trend toward greater specialization of interests among county organizations. It is common practice for these groups to avoid broadening their functions. When a new need emerges or when the group becomes sensitive to a neglected area of action, a new organization is established to deal with it. Thus, Red Cross chapters have frequently helped establish a county health association. PTA councils have assisted in organizing county library associations and child welfare groups. County farm bureaus have organized coöperative credit agencies, purchasing and marketing coöperatives, recreation and conservation associations.

Frequently, a number of established organizations jointly sponsor a new group, such as a county recreational council, a countywide chorus, a dramatics group, or an annual play day. Some of the county service agencies have done the same thing. For example, county agricultural agents and their advisory committees encourage farmers to organize county associations promoting crops or livestock particularly adaptable to the area, such as a potato growers' or a dairy herd improvement association. County parks and camps are occasionally promoted in similar manner, with the newly formed organization functioning as the focal point for securing county governmental support and the coöperation of other groups.

In some instances a newly established organization functions as a subsidiary of the older group taking the initiative in its creation. This is particularly true for coöperatives initiated by the Farm Bureau, the Grange, and other farm groups. On the other hand, many function independently, though they usually maintain close relationships with the parent group. Older-youth and young-adult groups need this close coöperation because their membership is usually so highly mobile that it is difficult for them to maintain a permanent organization without assistance from a more stable group.

However, a large proportion of the formally organized groups in the average county have been established independently and operate independently of other county organizations. Many of these are the "locals" of state and national special-interest organizations. Too numerous to name, they may be classified in categories, such as civic groups, social welfare, patriotic, historical, political action, sports and recreation, women's clubs, and professional. The last-named classifica-

TABLE 5. County-Wide Organizations in Frederick County, Maryland^a

<i>Agricultural</i>	<i>Social Service and Civic</i>
County Agricultural Society	PTA Council
Milk Producers Cooperatives (four separate groups)	Red Cross Chapter
Livestock Breeders Associations (four separate organizations)	Salvation Army Advisory Board
Agricultural Conservation Association	Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Farm Bureau	Tuberculosis Association
Japanese Beetle Control Committee	Free Dental Clinic
Machinery Dealers Association	Volunteer Fireman's Association
Pomona Grange	
<i>Homemaking</i>	<i>Cultural</i>
County Council of Homemakers Clubs	County Community Players, Inc.
Associated Women of the Farm Bureau	Cooperative Concert Association
<i>Professional</i>	<i>Conservation, Sports, and Recreation</i>
Bar Association	Fish and Game Protective Association
Dental Association	Izaak Walton League
Medical Society	Umpires Association
Ministerial Association	
Teachers Association	<i>Religious</i>
<i>Historical</i>	Council of Church Women
County Historical Society	Council of Religious Education
Daughters of the Confederacy	
<i>Political Action</i>	<i>Youth</i>
Democrats Club	County Glider Club
Young Democrats Club	Senior 4-H Council
Republican Club	
Progressive Party	
League of Women Voters	
Taxpayers Association	
W.C.T.U.	

^a S. Earl Grigsby and Harold Hoffsommer, *Rural Social Organization of Frederick County, Maryland*, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Maryland, College Park, March, 1949, Bulletin No. A51.

tion alone many include ministers, doctors, dentists, lawyers, and teachers all having active organizations in a particular county.

The wide variety and high degree of specialization of interests finding expression through countywide group action is well illustrated in Frederick County, Maryland (Table 5). In that county the forty-six active groups cover a wide range of interests with a heavy concentration of groups dealing with the various phases of agriculture. There are four different livestock breeders' associations and the same number of milk producers' coöperatives. There are seven different social service and civic groups and an equal number pursuing some form of political action.

ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITY STRENGTHENS THE COUNTY

The fundamental strength of the county as a social unit depends upon the attitudes, interests, and patterns of social participation of the people living in it. There is no better measure of that strength than the amount and variety of participation of the people in formal and informal countywide group activity. The fact that a group organizes itself on a county basis indicates its membership has a strong county consciousness to begin with. They may have a stronger ecological allegiance—to the home community for example. But this stronger unit, whatever it might be, did not suit group purposes or it would have been chosen as the basis for organization.

But the real strengthening process begins when a county group tackles a problem, develops a program, or accomplishes a purpose. Then strong *in-group attitudes* are developed, revealed in such statements as: "Our Council set up a camping program this year—something that Fayette County has been trying to do for the past five years." *Identification* of group members with their county reveals the social unity, the feelings of belongingness and loyalty, that characterize effective group processes everywhere.

THE COUNTY SEAT TOWN

There is a tremendous range in the size of population centers serving as headquarters for county government. Chicago, the county seat of Cook County, Illinois, is the nation's second largest city. A number of

other county seats are located in large metropolitan centers. But the great majority are either country towns or small cities that are typical rural trading centers.

Their small size does not indicate any lack in the importance they hold for rural people, however. Quite the opposite is true, for in many instances the county-seat town is the trade and community center to which most people in the county come for their goods and services. This is particularly true in the rural South, where the county seat is often the only important trading center in the county and is becoming increasingly important as a community center.

A similar condition also exists in other regions of the country. For example, Taylor³⁸ points out that in the corn belt railroad towns became the most important economic centers for farmers. Here were located the stockyards, grain elevators, and economic services essential to commercialized farming. As a result they outranked other towns in drawing power for farmer participation and were chosen as county seats largely for that reason.

County-seat towns therefore became not only prominent, but also dominant in the corn belt, for the functions performed by county officials were added to their trade functions. In due time they became not only the place of residence and business for the persons and private agencies that served farmers' interests, but also the headquarters of agencies, both public and private, that came to serve the county as a whole. They are, of course, the residences of the professionals who serve both farm and village people, and they have also become the chief harbors for retired farmers.³⁹

Other factors have been influential in increasing their drawing power. The fact that the state and national agricultural and social welfare services are located at the county seat has had a strong influence. The increase in county-supported services and functions has also played a large part. But perhaps even more significant, because it is completely voluntary, is the growth of the county seat as a center for social participation.

Even during earlier periods the county seat had many advantages

³⁸ Carl C. Taylor and associates, *Rural Life in the United States*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1949, p. 376.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

in that respect. People who came to town on business took time to engage in social activities. Court sessions drew large crowds of spectators who renewed acquaintances, exchanged news and gossip in constantly shifting huddles on the courthouse lawn, or swapped horses in a back lot. The county fair drew an even larger attendance and included even women and children.

Until recent decades town visits by back-country folk were relatively infrequent. The revolution came with improved highways and the automobile. What was formerly a day's journey became a matter of minutes.

The result may be observed in the typical county-seat town on a Saturday afternoon and evening. Main Street is thronged. Small groups gather in front of the grocery and hardware stores, in the drug store, and on the street corners, each busily engaged in friendly conversation. Many issues and problems are raised—talk about PMA acreage allotments, the county library, the schools; discussion of the proposed county hospital; grumblings about property tax rates; grapevine gossip about politics. One or more of the many countywide organizations and the lay advisory committee for one of the service agencies spends the afternoon meeting in courthouse rooms. Leaders stop in the newspaper office to announce the next meetings of their organizations. All these activities, some planned, others completely informal, are the builders of county consciousness which the county-seat town nurtures.

However, in some instances there are limiting factors. Another town or city within the county or nearby may exceed the county seat as a trade center. Some county seats are not centrally located. Topographic barriers handicap others. A number of strong communities with many different kinds of services and having a high degree of community consciousness may be found in a single county.

Where this is true the county seat has a dual role. It functions as the trade and social center for its immediate area. But it also functions as the center for the service agencies, the countywide organizations, and the informal activities that inevitably are associated with governmental activity and formally organized groups.

On the other hand, some counties are more important as social units than the local communities within their borders. For example, in

Frederick County, Maryland,⁴⁰ none of the twenty-eight rural communities (two of which had more than 5000 population each in their service areas) had "equal or superior status to the over-all county-wide organizational structure known as 'The County.'" Among the many factors that gave the county its dominant position, county politics and taxation loomed large. The county seat with a population of 16,000 was the county trade center, the hub for public and private agency services, and the center for the many county organizations.

THE COUNTY AMONG CHANGING SOCIAL PARTICIPATION PATTERNS

The growing complexity of rural life has brought in its wake a reshuffling in the patterns of social relations. Neighborhoods have declined; the village-centered natural community has become of strategic importance; and the county has grown stronger—as a unit of local government, as an area for economic and social service, and as a unit for social participation in formal and informal group action. Moreover, the service areas of large trade centers include open-country neighborhoods, natural communities, and counties.

Thus, rural people do not live their lives within the framework of one locality group pattern. They depend on a number, using each as they see fit in improving their ways of living. Moreover, these patterns are not mutually exclusive. Large neighborhoods blend into small natural communities; some large communities are also counties; some county-seat cities are the secondary trading centers for all or most of the natural communities in the county.

TRADITION AND CUSTOM ALSO PLAY A LARGE ROLE

Thus, in New England and to a lesser degree in New York State the town is so deeply ingrained in the thinking of people that the county will not likely ever become very important as a social unit. Moreover, many New England town boundaries conform closely with those of the natural community. Even when new demands require action covering a larger area, the people may not turn to the county.

⁴⁰ S. Earl Grigsby and Harold Hoffsomer, *Rural Social Organization of Frederick County, Maryland*, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Maryland, College Park, March, 1949, Bulletin No. A51.

The regional high school movement now under way in Massachusetts, the intermediate school district of New York State, both disregard county lines. However, counties in the latter state are strong units for a number of purposes, including highways, public welfare and health, agricultural services, and even for voluntary social organizations. Even in New Hampshire most of the rural lay councils⁴¹ established in 1947 to study educational conditions were organized on a county basis, and still more recently local school committeemen throughout the state organized themselves into county associations. These examples, no doubt, are isolated instances rather than illustrations of a well-defined trend.

Elsewhere throughout the country the opposite is true. The county has behind it the holding power of custom and tradition. But this source of strength pales to insignificance in comparison to its increasing use as a unit for social action. In this sense it is tied to the dynamic qualities of our social structure. In many areas some of its multisided aspects are still emerging and taking shape. Frequently, county leaders because of their wider participation view their county more broadly than do other people.

Bradford County, Pennsylvania, furnishes a good illustration. Even though there were ten well-defined communities and seventy-six neighborhoods within its borders, the people strongly identified themselves with the county in a number of ways. Newcomers to a particular locality had a higher social standing if they came from another part of the county rather than outside it. County consciousness was revealed by such remarks as "the way Bradford folks do things." But despite this revealing behavior most people continue to view their county as a governmental unit. County leaders, on the other hand, regarded it as a county community.⁴²

The gap between the thinking of these two groups perhaps indicates some of the dynamism inherent in our way of life. For regardless of what the county has meant to rural people in the past, its future is

⁴¹ *Lay-Professional Council Report to the People of New Hampshire*, the Council, Concord, 1947.

⁴² Donald G. Hay and M. E. John, *Rural Organization of Bradford County, Pennsylvania*, Agricultural Experiment Station, Pennsylvania State College, April, 1950, Bulletin 524, pp. 9 and 21.

tied with inseparable bonds to the constantly changing and growing amalgam of social structures that envelop us all.

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CHAPTER II

County Educational Needs

The purposes of a school system in a democracy are determined by the people. This involves the making of choices based upon some scale of values concerning what the people consider best both for present and for oncoming generations. From practical experience in coming to grips with the problems and issues confronting them, the American people have found that there are essential qualities required for effective citizenship. They have established the public school as an institution specifically designed for developing those qualities. With us, then, the purposes of our schools are chosen in terms of the ideals and values we hold, the interests and purposes in life we pursue, and the faith and reliance we place in the processes of education. Under such a system of free choices, these purposes are deeply rooted in our needs as a free people—needs that develop from the conditions and requirements for effective living in a democracy.

SOME COMMON NEEDS

Every public school, regardless of its size or location, has the responsibility for developing in the young people it serves certain knowledges, skills, attitudes, and understandings. These are the educational needs that are common to all people—young people and adults, rich and poor, regardless of their race, creed, or station in life.

Many statements of the common educational needs, worded in the form of educational objectives, have been formulated. They have been

arranged under various classifications. One of the most widely recognized was the statement of the Commission for the Reorganization of Secondary Education on the "seven cardinal principles" of education, which included the objectives of health, command of the fundamental processes, worthy home membership, vocation, citizenship, worthy use of leisure, and ethical character.

A more recent and much more highly definitive set of objectives was formulated by the Educational Policies Commission. After careful consideration of the social setting in which our schools operate and the requirements essential to effective participation in it, the Commission found that education should be concerned with the following areas: (1) with the development of the learner as a person; (2) with home, family, and community life; (3) with the economic demands on the individual; and (4) with the civic and social duties of the citizen.¹ For each of these areas a general objective was formulated which included a number of specific competencies that every educated citizen should possess. These objectives were, respectively:

1. The objectives of self-realization. These include the skills and understandings involved in use of the fundamental tools of learning, in healthy living, in recreation, and in development of a sound personal philosophy.

2. The objectives of human relationship. These include the attitudes, appreciations, social skills, and competencies in developing and maintaining wholesome family, home, and community life.

3. The objectives of economic efficiency. These include the competencies essential in making a living, wise spending, buying, and investing in lines of endeavor that bring personal satisfaction and have social worth.

4. The objectives of civic responsibility. These include the competencies needed for effective participation in local, state, and national governmental affairs; in civic enterprises and improvements in social policy.²

Many other statements of educational objectives have been formu-

¹ National Education Association, Educational Policies Commission, *Policies for Education in American Democracy*, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1946, pp. 188-189.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 192-277.

lated, including those by state and local survey commissions, curriculum revision committees, and lay-citizen groups studying their schools. As might be expected, the classifications vary in detail and definitiveness but in all their variety there is agreement on the areas of need common to all people which should be served by education. These common needs include:

1. The need for competence in speaking and writing and in reading and listening so that every person can express his thoughts clearly and can understand the meaning of the oral and written expression of others.
2. The need for the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for maintenance and protection of personal health and the health of others.
3. The need for competence in the ability to get along well with others, including wholesome mental health, personal adjustment, and sound social relationships.
4. The need for the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and appreciations essential to wholesome family living.
5. The need for competence in discriminating among values, so that personally satisfying and socially acceptable standards of conduct in personal and social relationships may be developed and applied in the affairs of daily living.
6. The need for competence in application of the scientific method—the exercise of critical thinking—to problems and issues, whatever their nature or source, that must be faced in effective living.
7. The need for an understanding of the social environment, including the governmental, economic, social, cultural, and religious institutions the people have created for satisfying their needs and wants.
8. The need for competence in participating effectively in a democracy.
9. The need to enjoy the beautiful, including literature, music, and art; and the need for opportunity to express creative abilities in them.
10. The need for competence in effective utilization of the advances of science and technology, including mastery of number processes and application of quantitative relationships, in the practical affairs of living.
11. The need for competence in earning a living through efforts that are personally satisfying and have social worth.
12. The need for a desirable degree of security, attained through wise buying, spending, and saving and through intelligent utilization of community agencies and resources that contribute to those ends.

Some might question with apparently good reason the necessity for considering county educational needs separate and apart from educational needs elsewhere when the common needs listed above are applicable in the county as well as everywhere throughout the country. Why not spell out these common needs in much detail and prescribe thereupon a uniform pattern of tasks for schools everywhere? There are a number of reasons why this should not be attempted even if it could be done. There are still more equally compelling reasons why it cannot be done.

In the first place the common educational needs are not the sole responsibility of the public school system. They are shared with other community institutions, organizations, and agencies that have educational functions, but these vary greatly from community to community in their capacities to educate. For example, the educational opportunities provided in a migratory labor or sharecropper family will be far inferior to those provided in an average Midwest farm home.

Moreover, many communities, the vast majority of which are in rural counties, do not have all the nonschool educational agencies needed for sharing responsibility with the schools in meeting the common needs. These shortages typically include public libraries, community recreation programs, adequate health education services, and opportunities in music and art. On the other hand, most of these rural counties have other agencies—the Coöperative Extension Services furnish a good example—that are uniquely suited to their needs. Both these strengths and shortages influence the work of the schools and must be considered by county school administrators in planning functional school programs.

There is a third consideration. In developing functional school programs it is necessary to consider not only the common needs and how they may be met but also the conditions influencing them. Educational needs have their sources in a complex matrix of social, economic, and cultural factors. The influence of these factors ranges far and wide into areas and conditions of living that at first thought might appear far removed from educational problems and issues. However, the connection is almost always more direct than appears on the surface. A single example will illustrate the point. Family income has a direct

relation to the magnitude of the school's task, even where states make direct financial provisions for equalizing educational opportunity. But even under such fortunate circumstances family income must support the other community educational agencies that share responsibility with the school.

Another question concerns how far county schools should go in meeting common educational needs. Should they assume a heavier responsibility for those educational functions not being performed well or not at all by other community institutions? How much responsibility should be taken for strengthening these institutions and for establishing other educational agencies that are needed? The answers to these questions lie in the fact that, with us, the public schools are residual institutions. They must do whatever needs to be done but which no other agency is doing adequately. Their responsibilities carry them just as far afield from the confines of the conventional curriculum as the needs of the people require—strengthening home and community life, helping to establish needed new services, reaching out and improving the quality of living for all. But in so doing, the job cannot be undertaken blindly or by guesswork. It is essential to know what needs to be done and what is being done by other agencies in the county and to build from that point.

A final consideration deals with the nature of educational needs as commonly conceived and stated. As set forth in the above list, which is the usual form of stating them, they are competencies to be achieved, or goals to be reached, by all young people. Thus, the bare statement of any given need does not indicate the magnitude of that need for any given group of people. Not all people would have the same distance to travel in achieving the competence it represents. To illustrate, young people in a sparsely settled rural county have more difficulty in developing a high degree of skills in the communication arts than children in a metropolitan county because there are fewer social situations demanding exercise of those skills. Children in the latter situation have many more opportunities and varied kinds of assistance to speed their progress. But the county school system, just as any other, must take young people where they are and proceed from there in helping them develop the desired competencies or meet their common

needs. The gap between where the pupils are at any given time and the goals they should achieve represents the breadth of the school's task. Again the magnitude of this task cannot be assumed or guessed at. County school administrators have to know if the schools under their jurisdiction do the job that is required.

For these reasons it is necessary to view county educational needs from the vantage point of the social and economic framework out of which they emerge and take their shape. In fact, a careful weighing of the factors making up this framework constitutes the starting point for developing the educational program on a realistic basis.

INFLUENCES OF COUNTY POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The number of children and youth to be educated is, of course, a first essential in determining the size of the county educational enterprise. That yardstick, however, by no means reveals the full magnitude of the task. To get a sound perspective the number of pupils must be viewed in relation to such factors as birth rate, age distribution, and mobility of the people. But these are not constant factors. They vary greatly in response to social, economic, and cultural influences. For this reason it is necessary to view first the people who are served by the county educational program.

PEOPLE SERVED BY THE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

The first chapter drew attention to the tremendous growth in urbanization and showed that half the nation's people, including more than three-fourths the total urban population, is concentrated in 233 metropolitan counties. It was also pointed out that more than three-fourths of our counties have no population center exceeding 10,000 persons. These rural counties have only 9 percent of the urban population but have over two-thirds of the rural farm and nearly half the rural nonfarm population.

Admittedly, any attempt to classify people served by the county school system runs into difficulties. As will be shown in subsequent chapters, states vary greatly in their structure for county school administration. Some county-unit systems include city schools as well as those in hamlets, villages, and the open country. In other situations

small cities as well as large metropolitan centers are very largely or even completely independent of the county system. In still other instances smaller urban systems are rapidly taking advantage of the breadth and quality of educational services being provided at the county level.

Another factor making classification difficult is that rural and urban people are in no wise neatly distributed in predominantly rural counties on the one hand and in metropolitan counties on the other. This is particularly true for the latter, which in addition to having a preponderance of the urban population also have almost a third of the rural nonfarm and a tenth of the farm people in the nation.

But despite all this complexity, rural people comprise the primary group with which the county school system is concerned. This holds even in metropolitan and other densely populated counties, though the rural population there is far from typical. Many are more urban than rural from a social, economic, and cultural standpoint. Suburban communities, the most rapidly growing settlements in the nation, spread outside municipal boundary lines and form concentrically patterned outposts around larger cities. Transportation systems, radio and television, social and cultural advantages, and job opportunities all combine to make ties strongest with the central city. These influences act as powerful magnets even in the open country, as reflected by above-average farm living standards and by the large proportion of small farms operated on a part-time basis by owners who work in the city.

Sociologically, these people are integral parts of an ecological entity whose nucleus is the central city. The only reason many of them can be classified as rural at all is because they live outside municipal boundary lines. But the fact that they do puts them under the jurisdiction of the county school system. They bring to the metropolitan county some of the most difficult administrative problems in American education.

But however great their educational problems may be, and it would be difficult to overstress them, metropolitan counties comprise but a very small percentage of county school systems. The more rural counties, many times as numerous, likewise have their distinctive problems

originating in the educational needs of rural people. Here are the people producing the nation's food and fiber—farm owner-operated families, sharecroppers and tenants, and migratory farm laborers. Added to these are large numbers of family groups barely able to eke out a subsistence level of living from the soil. Here also are the miners and lumbermen, village tradesmen and clerks, professional people and skilled artisans. Here too are small cities, not pocket-size editions of the great metropolitan center but trading centers closely tied to the economy and culture of their locale and directly reflecting these distinguishing characteristics. This is not a simple rural setting that springs from agrarian cultural patterns of years past. It is complex. It is rapidly changing in response to advances in social progress. But its people, though taking on more and more the characteristics associated with industrialization, nevertheless still exhibit important differences having significant implications for the county educational program.

THE HEAVY EDUCATIONAL BURDEN

In relation to their total populations county school systems are bountifully supplied with children. This becomes strikingly evident when the rural population is compared with the urban.

High Birth Rates. The strongest contributing factor to the large educational load in the county school system is the high birth rate among rural people. One of the most accurate measures for indicating their fecundity is the net reproduction rate, which takes into account both births and deaths and is calculated on the basis that a rate of 1000 would indicate a generation of people which was just replacing itself. Comparisons of rates for rural and urban people show that during the first four decades of the present century farm people had a rate twice that for urban, with the rural nonfarm rate falling midway between the two (Table 6). Even during 1942–1947, when urban births showed a large and unprecedented increase, the urban rate was but little more than enough to sustain the population of cities at their present size. Though the increase in rural areas during this period was not so large, rates for farm and rural nonfarm people were 1859 and 1465 respectively. Thus, under prevailing conditions

of births and deaths, the farm population is producing 85.9 percent more young people than are needed for farm family replacement. Rural nonfarm people are producing 46.5 percent more than replacement needs.

The educational problems and issues arising from these conditions run far deeper than bare facts on the number of children to be edu-

TABLE 6. Net Reproduction Rates of Urban, Rural Nonfarm, and Rural Farm People^a

Population Classification	Rates for Specified Periods			
	1905-1910	1930-1935	1935-1940	1942-1947
Urban and rural	1336	984	978	1292
Urban	937	747	726	1085
Rural nonfarm	1499	1150	1150	1465
Rural farm	2022	1632	1661	1859

^a Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1949, p. 25.

NOTE: A net reproduction rate of 1000 means that each generation would just replace itself if birth and death rates were to remain constant.

cated would indicate. Among these are positive influences that are sources of strength to the school system. Larger proportions of rural adults live in family units, the basic pattern of human association through which and by means of which social progress finds expression. Family life is stronger, the simpler social structure in the rural county having fewer influences tending to weaken familial structure. Participation in social and work experiences as a family group are more common. In fact, they are more necessary.

But, most important, more rural families have children. This brings greater stability and wholesomeness not only to family living but to community life as well. The schools are brought into direct contact with more homes, thereby widening the base for operation of educational programs that come to grips with improving the quality of family and community living.

There is another side to the question, however. Higher birth rates also mean that rural families are larger. A fifth of them have three or more children. And even in the most rural county, children are not the economic asset they were in the simple agrarian economy of years past. Thus, the large rural family not only heightens the educational

burden in the county school system; it increases the load for health, welfare, and other social services. And the demands for more and more cash income necessary for maintenance of rural family living standards make it increasingly difficult for the large family to maintain a high level of living. Moreover, the large family results in a population surplus which is not needed for maintaining the rural economy.

Many People Must Migrate. According to a recent Census report³ one out of every five persons in this country was living in a different house than he lived in a year earlier. Of those moving, almost a third had changed their county of residence. One of the earmarks of our changing culture is that many people move about—from city to suburb, from farm to village, and from farm and village to city. While much of this migration undoubtedly comes from a wide variety of causes, a large part of the urbanward migration from rural areas originates in stern necessity. High birth rates produce heavy population pressure on the land and many people must move.

Migration from rural areas is spread through all age groups but is chiefly concentrated among older youths and young adults, approximately half of whom must leave the home community for economic opportunity. This exodus reaches its highest pitch when the business cycle is on the upswing. The outlook for agriculture is also brightest at such times but opportunities in the city strongly overbalance the holding influence of the improved farm situation. Migration recedes when industrial activity declines, even operating in reverse during economic depression. But when business is good the migratory rate is greatest in counties where family incomes are lowest, for low incomes and large families are closely associated. Young women leave at an earlier age than men and in greater numbers.

The social and economic effects of this migration have long claimed the attention of rural sociologists and economists. Many have pointed out the high economic costs to rural people who must educate large numbers of young people whose years of economic productivity will be spent in the city. Other well-meaning leaders deplore the loss of

³ Bureau of the Census, *Internal Migration in the United States: April 1947 to April 1948*, Series P-20, No. 22.

these young people from the rural community and say steps should be taken to stop it. But unless manufacturing and service industries can be established to provide more job opportunities, young people will continue their urbanward movement. They cannot remain on the land except under a scheme of farm division similar to the Chinese system where the father's farm is divided among the sons with each succeeding generation having less and less land on which to make a living. This, of course, would be utterly impossible in a dynamic society such as ours.

The nub of the problem, though rooted deeply in socioeconomic conditions, is primarily educational in nature. The real issue centers around the educational needs of young people who must migrate as well as the needs of those remaining in their rural environment. Though both groups have many needs in common, there are significant differences. The so-called common learnings dealing with the cultural heritage would certainly be applicable here. But more is required.

All need a highly competent guidance system for assistance in making intelligent vocational choices. Here the great need is for knowledge about the kinds of vocational opportunity available, specific information about the nature of the various fields, and the educational requirements for each. Admittedly, all young people regardless of where they live need this knowledge. But rural young people have nowhere except the school to turn for help. Isolated from the industrial labor market they lack firsthand contacts with sources of help found in urban situations. Unless helped by the school they must choose blindly by guess or hearsay. With increasing educational preparation required even for relatively unskilled occupations, youth cannot afford to wait until high school graduation before making their choices. Exploration should begin in the junior high school and for most a fairly definite choice made by the end of the tenth grade.

However, intelligent choice of a vocation is but part of the picture. Equally essential is an educational program which will enable rural youth to prepare for pursuit of their chosen vocations. Such a program includes college preparatory work for those continuing their formal education, typically less than a fourth of those graduating from high

school. It also includes preparation for the majority whose formal education terminates in the high school and many of whom will go to the city seeking employment. Thus, if educational needs of rural youth are viewed in terms of future demands on them for intelligent adjustment to their environment, then the county educational program must be as broad and comprehensive as those demands require. The needs of young people destined for urban employment or for work in the home community require just as full and complete consideration as the needs of the minority who will continue their education in the colleges and universities.

If the needs of the larger group are met as they should be, then the county educational program must of necessity provide opportunities for vocational preparation in the skilled and semiskilled trades and for industry, for business and distributive occupations, as well as for agriculture and homemaking. It should be noted in this connection that vocational agriculture and homemaking programs, however good they may be, are nevertheless insufficient for meeting the vocational needs of all young people who will remain in the rural county.

As will be shown later in greater detail, many of this latter group will enter occupational fields in the trades and small industries, in clerical and sales work, and in businesses related to agriculture and to homemaking. In many instances their vocational needs are very similar to the needs of those migrating. But unlike those who will leave and may continue their preparation in the city, these young people will in many instances never leave the home county for the preparation they should have. Moreover, they should not have to leave to get that preparation. In fact, there are special compelling reasons for serving the vocational needs of all those remaining in the home community with maximum effectiveness.

Fewer Productive Workers. Continued high birth rates and urbanward migration both combine to produce an inevitable unbalance in the size of various age groups in the rural county. In the total county population there is a relatively smaller number of people in the adult age group producing the economic goods and services on which local support of the school system depends. This does not mean that too many adults migrate, however. Under existing conditions in many

counties, particularly in the rural South, exactly the opposite is true so far as population pressure on the land and economic opportunity are concerned.

But the fact remains that rural farm adults in the most economically productive age group, being relatively fewer in number, are confronted with the heaviest economic and educational burdens to be found in our social structure. For example, there are 545 school-age children for every 1000 farm adults 20 to 64 years of age. The corresponding number in the urban population is 316 (Table 7). Re-

TABLE 7. Number of School-Age Children and Older Age Groups per Thousand Adults 20 to 64 Years of Age in Rural and Urban Areas^a

Area and Population Classification	Number per 1000 Adults Aged 20-64	
	Children 5-17 Years of Age	Adults Aged 65 and Over
United States		
Urban	316	108
Rural nonfarm	426	130
Rural farm	545	125
Northeast		
Urban	310	102
Rural nonfarm	403	139
Rural farm	460	176
South		
Urban	355	91
Rural nonfarm	480	99
Rural farm	615	109
North Central		
Urban	311	112
Rural nonfarm	401	174
Rural farm	474	141
Mountain		
Urban	270	127
Rural nonfarm	382	110
Rural farm	462	117

^a Calculated from 16th Census of the United States, *Population*, 1940, Vol. II, Parts 1-7.

gional variations are equally striking, with farm adults in the South having the largest relative number of children to support.

In addition to greater relative numbers of children rural counties also have more old people, aged 65 and over. There are higher proportions among the rural nontfarm than the farm population, particularly in areas having highest farm incomes, as in the North Central states where farmers on retiring often move to the villages. But in the Southern and Northeastern states more old people live on the farms. However, the significant thing is that despite the migration of many rural adults some of them return in their old age. With the numbers of aged people rapidly increasing because of advances in public health and in medical science, their welfare is claiming increasing public attention and support. This is as it should be. But whether we like to face it or not, the aged are in a very real sense competitors of the school-age group for tax dollars produced by the worker-age group. There are instances on record where the children came out second best. Deplorable as this may be, the relative merits of the case for either group is not the central issue here.

The essence of the matter is that our scale of human values and our standards of living require high levels of economic productivity for their realization. In rural counties, having more old people and school-age children, these goals are more difficult to achieve. The relative smallness of the worker-age group highlights the key importance of high economic productivity by all its members. Thus, the effects of inadequate vocational preparation are more severe in the rural county. Each inefficient worker affects relatively more people, especially schoolchildren. To the degree that this is true, the county educational program has even greater responsibility than school systems elsewhere to serve the vocational needs of young people with maximum effectiveness.

OCCUPATIONAL TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

The era of the bull-tongue plow and hoe farming has passed. Folk beliefs that governed farming practices have faded in the strong light of scientific agriculture. The village blacksmith shop had been replaced by garages and filling stations; the old-time hardware by the

farm machinery store and electric appliance shop; the general store by the "five and ten," the specialty shop, the clothing, drug, and grocery stores. A way of life has been changed. An educational program that served the people well during earlier days can no more meet today's demands than the bull-tongue plow can replace the tractor-drawn rotilla.

OCCUPATIONAL CHANGES

The transition from a predominantly agrarian to a highly industrialized economy has produced tremendous shifts in the occupational patterns of the nation's people. A century ago sixty-four out of every hundred workers were employed in agriculture; in 1947 the proportion had dropped to fourteen. The development of diversified occupational pursuits has of course been heavily concentrated in large urban centers but rural counties have also been profoundly affected.

In fact, less than half of all rural workers engage in agricultural pursuits (Table 8). Of those engaged in other work, most are rural nonfarm people the majority of whom live in the towns, villages, and hamlets that constitute the community centers for rural America. Their occupational patterns closely resemble the patterns of urban workers. Almost a fourth of them are engaged in manufacturing, processing the crops grown on nearby farms and producing a wide variety of products from raw materials often shipped in from distant places. But many other occupations are represented in these rural centers. Larger proportions of the workers are employed in such fields as construction work, business and repair services, professional work, and governmental services than is the case with urban workers.

Even among the workers living on farms one in five is employed in nonagricultural work. More are engaged in manufacturing than in any other nonfarming occupation. Compared with relative proportions of urban workers, almost half as many workers living on farms are employed in construction work; a sixth as many in transportation, communication, and public utilities; an eighth as many in wholesale and retail trade; and more than a fourth as many in professional and related services. The fact that they live on plots of land in the open country large enough to be classified as farms does not mean they are

TABLE 8. Industry of Employed Workers, by Rural-Urban Residence, United States, 1940^a

Industry Group	Urban Percent	Rural		
		Total Percent	Non- farm Percent	Rural Farm Percent
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture	1.0	45.7	7.4	77.8
Nonagricultural industries	97.1	52.5	90.3	20.9
Forestry and fishing	.1	.4	.7	.2
Mining	1.0	3.6	6.5	1.2
Construction	4.8	4.2	6.8	2.1
Manufacturing	29.1	14.3	24.1	6.1
Transportation, communication, and other public utilities	8.7	4.0	7.1	1.4
Wholesale and retail trade	21.3	9.3	16.9	2.9
Finance, insurance, and real estate	4.7	1.1	2.1	.3
Business and repair services	2.2	1.4	2.5	.5
Personal services	10.8	5.8	9.1	2.9
Amusement, recreation, and related services	1.2	.4	.8	.1
Professional and related services	8.6	5.3	8.7	2.5
Government	4.6	2.7	5.0	.7
Unclassified	1.9	1.8	2.3	1.3

^a From Carl C. Taylor and associates, *Rural Life in the United States*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1949, p. 255. (Based on 16th Census of the United States.)

farm people. Many engage in work that is related to agriculture only indirectly if at all, but provide the goods and services that farmers in the community need. But their growing numbers serve to illustrate the increasing complexity of the economic structure of the rural county and indicate the breadth of interests which the county educational program serves.

However, the large proportions of rural workers in diversified occupations should not obscure the fact that agriculture is the mainstay of the rural economy. Though farming is the total concern of smaller proportions of the nation's labor force, it still remains the most fundamental of all occupations. As the national population continues to increase, as higher standards of living are realized through scientific and technological improvements, as our total economy continues to become increasingly complex and its multitudinous segments become more interdependent, then the economic well-being and effectiveness of

people in the rural county become more vital to the welfare of the entire nation.

AGRICULTURE A FAMILY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

The impact of industrialization on conditions of living in the rural county has by no means come entirely from outside the local situation. Deep-seated changes within agriculture itself have had a strong influence not only in the rural county but in the total national economy as well. In fact, industrialization could not have become predominant, nor living standards have reached present levels, without these changes.

Machines on the Land. The large reduction already mentioned in the proportion of farm workers has been the result of a number of forces that still continue to operate in the rural county. None of these has had greater influence than the mechanization of farming.

The self-sufficient farm with its drudgery of hand labor was very wasteful of manpower. Soapmaking, cloth weaving, sowing and reaping by hand, and flailing the ripened grain kept many hands busy from dawn to dusk and resulted in little more than the farm family needed for its own use. In 1820 the average farm worker produced enough food and fiber for five people; in 1940 he produced enough for fifteen. In a century the number of man-hours required to produce 100 bushels of wheat dropped from 233 to 47. A half-century ago a span of horses plowed two acres of sod a day; now a tractor-drawn, 50-inch disk plow turns 28 acres.

These striking developments have not come merely as the result of placing modern machines in the hands of simple country folk who put them to good use. The untenability of this has been well illustrated by such attempts with Asiatic peasants, which have resulted in utter failure. But with us public school systems have produced a literate people able, when given the opportunity, to apply research findings of agricultural agencies intelligently and effectively. But remarkable as progress up to the present has been, much remains to be done. Of the 21.2 billion man-hours spent on farms in 1944 about 60 percent involved work with the hands or with small hand tools such as the ax, pitchfork, hoe, shovel, and husking peg. Careful estimates indicate that the 13 billion hours so spent could be reduced by almost half if

the machines that modern science and technology has produced were put into effective use everywhere on farms.⁴

The speed with which changes take place highlights the great need for educational programs enabling the people to make intelligent adaptations. For example, in 1930 less than 10 percent of the nation's farms had central-station electric power service; by 1939 a fifth of them had such service and by the middle of 1946 over half of them had it. The full significance of the opportunities for realistic and practical educational programs helping the people to make intelligent use of this development can be measured only in terms of how far this man-made resource can lessen human drudgery and bring a better way of life.

Science in Kitchen and Field. In bygone years knowledge of farming and homemaking was passed down from mother to daughter and from father to son with assurance of its adequacy for the demands of the times. An era of scientific research and practical application of the findings upset this deeply ingrained folkway. Responsibility for providing farm people opportunity to improve their practices became a matter of public policy. Land grant colleges and other agricultural agencies conducted needed research and disseminated the findings.

The result has been that successful farmers and rural housewives have become practitioners in scientific fields without themselves being scientists. Application of the latest advances made in the fields of genetics, animal nutrition, plant and animal pathology, soil science, as well as the sciences of human nutrition, home management, and child care, have become matters of everyday concern. Useful plants brought from the other side of the world are grown by farmers who have never been outside their home state. Pastures that once grazed dairy herds producing an annual average 2500 pounds of milk per cow are now grazed by herds producing more than 6000 pounds per cow. The egg production of hens has increased nearly a fifth in the last eight years. Hybrid corn averages a fifth more bushels per acre than other varieties.

⁴U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Progress of Farm Mechanization*, October, 1947, Miscellaneous Publication No. 630, pp. 28-29.

So great has been the contribution of scientific practices and of mechanization that during World War II the nation's farmers were able to increase the total production of food and fiber by a fourth despite the movement of 5 million farm people into urban areas and into military service. Both mechanization and scientific practices are interrelated influences that are in turn intertwined with a third factor, the commercialization of agriculture, which has changed rural life and brought new educational needs.

Farming a Business. An industrialized economy such as ours requires a tremendous pool of man power unable to produce the food it consumes. But the nation's farmers have been able to feed the total population and, as noted earlier, contribute a sizable portion of each generation of youth for work in the cities. In so doing they have moved from farming as a way of life to farming as a business enterprise. Of course, from earliest times farmers have raised crops to sell but, except on the cotton and tobacco plantations, which were primarily commercialized enterprises, farming for cash played an incidental and relatively minor part. A family could raise most of what it needed; the surplus could be sold to buy necessities not produced on the farm. Ownership of the land was basic; it meant security and made the family an economic self-contained unit.

Today many people invest in farms they never intend to operate themselves and still greater numbers of others farm land they do not own. Almost everywhere emphasis has shifted to the profit motive. Production of food and fiber for sale is a major consideration wherever farming is successful. There is no other alternative if high levels of living are to be maintained and the nation's nonfarm population gets the food it needs. Nevertheless, science, mechanization, and commercialization have brought perplexing and persistent problems. Some of these are:

1. Large capital investment is required. The era of cheap or free land capable of high yields is past. Present-day land values are responsive to the state of business generally, and the purchase of land by nonagricultural businesses for investment purposes helps to keep values high. In 1945 the average value of the land and buildings for the

nation's 6 million farms was over \$8000 each.⁵ The costs of the modern machinery and implements which make high production rates possible are likewise high. In some Midwestern states the high costs of machinery necessary for farm operation and high land values are responsible for increases in tenancy. Since many farmers cannot buy both land and machinery they prefer to own the machines and equipment they need and use it on rented land. Nearly everywhere it is becoming increasingly difficult for a young man to begin as a farm laborer and to work his way upward to ownership of a farm.

2. Cash income is essential. The operating costs of a successful farm enterprise are high. Depreciation of farm machinery takes place rapidly even under good care. Fertilizers, weed and pest control, spraying of crops, purchase of certified grain seed, artificial insemination of cattle, purchase of purebred livestock, all bring increased quality in farm production but they require cash expenditures.

Most important, however, is the demand that comes from improved levels of living. As these levels more nearly approach those of urban people, larger money incomes are essential. In fact, aside from expenditures for operation of the farm, the spending habits of farm people are becoming increasingly similar to those of people in villages and smaller cities. More farmers than formerly send their children to the dentist regularly; cases of serious accident or illness are hospitalized in more instances; more mothers are given prenatal medical care and have their babies in a hospital. Expenditures for clothing and grooming are higher—farmers visiting the trading center are no longer distinguishable because of different modes and standards of dress; farm women patronize city dress shops; drugstores, beauty parlors, and barber shops in the trading centers depend heavily on farm people for their patronage.

More cultural and recreational advantages are being sought. Two out of three farm families own an automobile which is important not only for use in connection with farm business but is equally important for weekly trips to the movie theater and for participation in social, cultural, and recreational activities in nearby villages and small cities.

⁵ U.S. Census of Agriculture, *Farms and Farm Characteristics by Value of Products*, 1945, Table I, p. 1.

About three out of four families have radios; six out of ten take a daily newspaper; nearly three-fourths receive one or more magazines, a fourth regularly taking four or more; and almost a third have a telephone.⁶

Improved living standards are likewise reflected in home conditions. Between 1940 and 1945 the number of homes with mechanical refrigerators more than doubled. Half the homes have power-driven washing machines, more than half have self-heating irons, and about one in three has running water in the house.⁷ The desire for increased home comfort extends to improvements in the structure of the home itself, modern furniture, and more attractive furnishings. But regardless of the area in home and family living in which desires for improvement come, the need for greater cash income to meet the total range of demands becomes correspondingly greater. And even though standards of living have been raised, the levels of living in many homes are still far short of those standards. One of the most influential factors that deter farm people from achieving them is the lack of sufficient income.

3. Incomes are very unevenly spread. As shown in the accompanying table,⁸ the income from agriculture maintains an even proportion of the total national income when business in general is good and when it is at a low ebb, at no time exceeding 10 percent of the total.

Thus, about one-tenth of the national income is spread among rural

Year	Total Income (millions)	From Agriculture (millions)
1929	\$ 87,355	\$ 7,791
1933	39,584	3,521
1939	72,532	5,951
1941	103,834	8,655
1943	169,686	14,270
1944	183,838	14,486
1945	182,691	15,276
1946	179,562	17,275
1947	201,709	18,734
1948	226,204	21,967

⁶ U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Trends in Farm Family Levels and Standards of Living*, August, 1947.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ From Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1950, p. 265.

farm people who constitute slightly under a fifth of the total population and have almost 30 percent of the nation's school-age children. However, comparisons such as these do not reveal the size of the problem, and comparisons of average farm and urban incomes are even less helpful in this respect. The earnings of a relatively few high-income farms raise national averages so high that full significance of the very large number of low-income farms is lost.

TABLE 9. Percentage of Farms, Farm Population, Farm Acreage, and Value of Farm Products, by Economic Class, United States, 1945^a

Economic Class	Number of Farms	Farm Population	Farm Acreage	Gross Value of Farm Production	Value of Farm Products Sold
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Large-scale units	1.7	3.7	25.8	22.0	24.2
Large family farms	7.0	8.5	18.3	23.5	25.1
Medium family farms	20.0	21.3	24.1	30.0	30.5
Small family farms	28.4	28.5	18.1	17.1	15.4
Part-time farms	10.3	10.9	2.3	1.9	.9
Small holdings	15.8	14.0	5.8	4.2	3.0
Nominal units	16.8	13.1	5.6	1.4	.7

^a U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Long-Range Agricultural Policy: A Study of Selected Trends and Factors Relating to the Long-Range Prospect for American Agriculture for the House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture*, March, 1948, p. 59.

Analysis on the basis of economic classification is more revealing. For example, the large-scale units, though representing less than 2 percent of the total number of farms and on which live about 4 percent of the farm population, account for over 24 percent of all farm products sold (Table 9). These are the so-called "factory" farms conducted like large-scale business and employing large numbers of hired laborers, particularly migratory workers. But the large family farms also exhibit many of the same characteristics. Combined with the large-scale units, they account for less than 10 percent of the nation's farms, but they produce almost half of all farm products sold.

The medium family farms, a fifth of the total number and having slightly over a fifth of the rural farm population, account for 30 per-

cent of farm produce sold. The average farm in this group in 1945 had a gross value of products of \$4650, which included the food consumed by the family.

Over two-fifths of our farms are small-scale units. Nearly a million of these are nominal units, representing for the most part residential homes and retirement units with three or more acres of land. There are also slightly over 600,000 part-time farms that are operated by owners whose major income is derived from nonfarm work. Both these groups produce insignificant amounts, either for home use or for sale. However, the numbers of both nominal and part-time farms are rapidly increasing as more people seek the benefits of rural life while engaged in nonfarm work or on retiring.

The small family farms are the most numerous, accounting for 28 percent of the total. Although this group has 28 percent of the farm people, it produces but 15 percent of all farm products that are sold. The average farm yields \$1874 worth of products, including those grown for home consumption. Even less favorable for maintaining adequate living standards are the more than 900,000 farms classified as small holdings on which nearly one-seventh of the total rural population struggles for a living. The average farm in this group has an annual gross value of products of \$825.

Both the small-size family farm and the small holdings have low acreages in cropland, small capital investment, and very little machinery. Many of them have neither horses, mules, nor a tractor. Most lack the modern facilities that make farm life enjoyable, nor are they likely to get them so long as present practices are followed. Lacking animal or machine power, they must depend on hand labor which brings in meager returns and yields little more than a bare subsistence, but rarely enough to accumulate the capital necessary to make the farm an effective production unit. With labor productivity varying directly with the amount of capital used in the form of good land, modern machinery, and purebred livestock, most of the labor employed on these farms is ineffectively or underemployed. This condition has exactly the same effect on individual earnings and on national income as periodic unemployment among industrial workers. Rises in urban unemployment without fail brings widespread concern throughout our

economy. But the chronic underemployment of farm people, resulting in great losses in national well-being, is tolerated year after year.

This is not a situation that will cure itself with passage of time. In fact, unless positive measures are taken the relative position of families on these small unproductive farms, in comparison with rising living standards of families elsewhere, may become worse instead of better. Much will depend on the forthrightness and realism with which the county educational program, in coöperation with agricultural and other agencies, attacks the problem of helping them improve their lot.

4. The outlook for hired farm workers is discouraging. Commercialized farming has increased the need for hired farm laborers, particularly during planting and harvesting seasons. This is true not only for the large-scale "factory" farm but for smaller commercialized units as well. In days past the hired laborer could look forward with confidence to becoming an owner himself, but today the road upward to ownership of a productive farm is a rocky one. Taylor⁹ points out that hired workers' inability to rise in the economic classes in agriculture and their declining status in the labor market are among the most significant trends in rural life today.

Many hired farm laborers come from the small family farms and small holdings mentioned above. Many come from sharecropper and tenant families. Working for wages on other farms supplements their meager incomes but wage scales are insufficient to permit accumulation of capital required for ownership of a productive farm. In a very real sense they occupy residual positions in the labor market, and increasing proportions of them are unable without adequate preparation to move into other types of employment where higher wage rates and steady work prevail. Many do leave the farms when business is good, adding to the untrained labor force in urban areas. Still greater numbers could seek nonfarm employment either in the home community or elsewhere if they were trained in the skills in demand by the industrial and commercial labor market. The need for educational programs providing training in these skills is highlighted by the fact that in 1945 a full

⁹ Carl C. Taylor and associates, *Rural Life in the United States*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1949, pp. 528-530.

fifth of all farm wage workers were between fourteen and eighteen years of age.¹⁰

5. Many farm laborers are migratory. Heavy seasonal demands for agricultural labor and modern transportation have created a situation in which hundreds of thousands of migratory farm families follow the crops. In 1945, after their ranks had been depleted by wartime employment conditions, there still remained 600,000 workers who roamed from farm to farm, state to state, and region to region settling down for a few days work on one farm and moving on to the next having crops ready for harvest. Southern Negroes and whites follow the vegetable harvests up the Atlantic seaboard. Mexicans and Negroes follow the cotton picking season from the Gulf States northward. Mexicans and Grapes of Wrath victims follow fruit and vegetable harvests up and down the Pacific coast. Families from the Appalachians work their way northward in summer and southward in winter. Every major farming region has its portion of this uprooted mass of humanity.

The economic costs of their underemployment are high. Much time is spent in travel and searching for work. But the social costs are higher still. These are a people apart—their social ties are at loose ends; they do not partake of the richness of rural community life, neither do they contribute anything to it except their labor. Even greater, however, are the costs in human values. Constantly on the move, family living with them has been denuded of much of its basic strength and meaning. Children begin working in the fields at an early age, older members of the family being unable to earn sufficient income to keep the family supplied with basic necessities. A study of 600 migratory worker families in New York found that one-fourth of the workers were under 14 years of age; another in Texas revealed that half the school-age children in the families studied were not enrolled in school; of 2750 children of migratory families in fourteen Michigan counties, only little over a fourth were in school.¹¹ Recent federal legislation requiring a 16-year minimum age for hired laborers producing crops which go into interstate commerce will, if vigorously enforced, eliminate the

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

¹¹ U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Federal Security Agency, *Children in Migratory Agricultural Families*, 1946.

that adequate health protection brings to the security of the farm family. Enrollment of farm people in the Blue Cross is growing. In response to demands of farm families for protection against the burdens of sickness and accident, some farm organizations have enrolled their members in group health insurance plans. For example, the Farmers Union locals offer their members surgical and hospitalization group policies; some state and county farm bureaus provide health insurance policies through their own mutual insurance companies.

Group Action on Economic Problems. As indicated above, security and success in maintaining high living standards are not matters of individual families working alone and independently of others. Though the family farm enables the farmer to be his own boss and has always fostered a high degree of independence, successful farming in large measure depends on coöperative group action.

The processes of marketing have become so complex that individual farmers cannot deal with them effectively. Utilization of dependable outlets for the food produced on the farm is just as essential as effective production practices. Many farmers have overcome this difficulty by organizing coöperative marketing associations through which their produce reaches commercial outlets. In 1946 there were more than 7000 farmers' marketing associations having more than 3 million memberships and doing an annual business exceeding \$5 billion.¹³ Associations range in size from two or three dozen farmers to large organizations having thousands of members. Some are organized to market a single type of product, such as citrus fruits, cereal grains, livestock, or vegetables; others may market more than one type, dairy and poultry products, for example.

These coöperative ventures involve more than just the selling of products that farmers grow, however. They would fail unless high-quality products were marketed through them, so, consequently, they have become powerful forces in maintaining high standards for produce reaching the markets. Standards of size and quality are kept high through systems of grading and inspection. Consumer demand is stimu-

¹³ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Credit Administration, *Statistics of Farmers' Marketing and Purchasing Cooperatives*, 1945-46.

lated through use of modern merchandising practices, such as packaging vegetables in household-size containers. In fact, many coöperatives have increased employment opportunities in the home community through establishing better merchandising methods. Quick-freezing plants are operated locally for processing poultry, beef, fruits and vegetables, and citrus-fruit juices. Coöperatively owned local plants process milk into butter, cheese, dry skim milk, and ice cream.

Coöperative group action on economic problems extends into other areas. Over 2700 purchasing coöperatives with a membership of nearly 2 millions do an annual business exceeding \$900 million.¹⁴ Credit coöperatives are widely used sources of low-interest-rate loans to farmers. Rural electric coöperatives furnish electric light and power to millions of farm people.

Educational programs for the farmer members figure prominently in coöperative activities. In fact, many of the organizations themselves provide highly effective channels through which the services of agricultural extension specialists can be utilized by individual farmers. Many larger associations employ their own specialists to assist the members. For example, the thirty Wisconsin Dairy Herd Improvement Associations employ 187 full-time and seven part-time technicians and eight veterinarians for work in artificial breeding alone.¹⁵

The full significance of the coöperative movement for the well-being of the farm family can hardly be overstressed. It has provided the small-scale operator a sound, efficient method whereby he can compete on equal terms with the "factory in the field" producing a hundredfold greater. Actually, the movement represents a twentieth-century adaptation for economic purposes of the coöperativeness that characterized farm neighborhood life in pioneer day. Its widespread growth suggests bright possibilities for an even further extension of the movement to low-income and subsistence farming regions where the need for this type of group action is undoubtedly very great. There may be much significance in the fact that the North Central states, where farm family incomes are higher than in any other region of the country, have

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ University of Wisconsin, College of Agriculture, *Agricultural Extension in Wisconsin*, Report of 1947, the University, Madison.

three-fifths of the total number of marketing and purchasing coöperatives and the same proportion of the total membership.

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION PROCESSES

The first chapter gave considerable emphasis to changing patterns of social participation among rural people and described a number of adaptations they have made to conditions surrounding them. It is worth recalling that the closely knit neighborhood group, with its strong identity of many common interests and its face-to-face relationships, has lost ground almost everywhere to larger and more diversified associational patterns in which relationships of people are more highly specialized and impersonal. This transition has by no means been completed, either in the sense that neighborhood life is entirely outmoded or that other patterns function as well as they might.

NEEDS FOR EFFECTIVE PATTERNS

The groups with which rural people identify themselves and in which they take an active part are determined primarily by their interests rather than by the locality in which they live. Thus, the social participation of a single progressive farm family may represent a wide range of interests and include a number of different associational patterns. The father may be active in a county farm bureau, stockholder in the local dairy coöperative, member of the lodge and civic club in the town where he trades, and a close crony of farmers in his neighborhood. The mother may be a member of the county Red Cross chapter executive committee, vice-president of the community PTA, member of the village church choir, and an active participant in the neighborhood farm women's club. A daughter may be leader of the neighborhood 4-H Club, member of the village dramatics group, community and church choirs, and one of the spark plugs in the village teen canteen. The son may be a member of the village Boy Scout troop, baseball team, conservation club, and his neighborhood 4-H Club. The family may frequently visit friends scattered across three counties, travel to the nearest large city occasionally, and attend movies weekly in the village theater. They are regarded as good neighbors by families living nearby and they, in turn, place a high value on the close and

friendly relationships their neighborhood makes possible. But the point is that no one pattern of association could satisfy their needs for effective group living.

Neighborhoods Have Their Place. Good neighborhood living still has basic values that other patterns of group activity cannot entirely supplant. The relationships it fosters meet fundamental social needs. Its simplicity, informality, day-to-day contacts, and opportunities for sharing the burdens of bad and the fruits of good fortune are values that rural people hold tenaciously. The fact that rural neighborhoods in many areas are no longer strong does not indicate these values have lost their appeal.

On the contrary, there is need for local activities and organizations which will hold the neighborhood group together and enable it to capitalize on these values. As Kolb and Brunner point out, "the evidence is clear that country neighborhoods can maintain their activeness, and by the same token, inactive neighborhoods can be revived or new ones formed."¹⁶ Difficulties arise, however, when attempts are made to sustain neighborhoods by means of organizations or institutions that are no longer able to function effectively in a neighborhood situation. There is no better illustration of this than the thousands of common school districts which may have served the people well in earlier times, but which no longer can function effectively either as administrative units or as sustainers of neighborhood association. For example, of the 119 school districts in Livingston County, Michigan only 28 were active neighborhoods and in over 60 percent of the county area there was no evidence of neighborhood belongingness.¹⁷ Even if small districts were able to sustain neighborhood solidarity, this would not justify keeping them, because invariably they are grossly inadequate for school administrative purposes.

Much the same condition holds for the neighborhood school. If because of population sparsity or other limiting factors the neighborhood school represents the best adaptation possible for the children,

¹⁶ J. H. Kolb and E. S. Brunner, *A Study of Rural Society*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1946, p. 249.

¹⁷ Paul A. Miller and J. Allan Beegle, *The Farm People of Livingston County, Michigan*, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Michigan State College, East Lansing, June, 1947.

then it should be strengthened in every way possible to make a maximum contribution to neighborhood solidarity. But when larger schools can be established for better serving the educational needs of pupils, there is no educational justification for retaining the neighborhood school as a crutch for support of an otherwise shaky neighborhood social structure. This applies particularly to the thousands of small rural high schools with enrollments too low for provision of an adequate educational program and located in small hamlets that are nothing more than large neighborhoods. If there must be a choice between the two, a good school takes priority over "holding our little neighborhood together." However, there is little reason for having to resort to such a final choice. The people need help in making adaptations in strengthening their neighborhood and every educational and social agency in the county has responsibility for helping them. But whatever is done to help primary neighborhood groups to function effectively will by no means meet all the groups needs of rural people. The larger community, with its complexity of structure and varied activities for serving specialized interests, is more important in the lives of an educated people.

Participation in Community Organizations. Rural community life consists of many institutions, agencies, and organizations through which the people take action on matters of concern to them. An essential aspect of the strong rural community is that it have a wide enough range of formally organized groups giving people opportunity to pursue their specialized interests. It is equally essential both for individual and community welfare that people take advantage of their opportunities. Rural sociologists agree that one of the best indexes of the social organization of a community is the degree to which all its people participate in its organizational and institutional life.

But a surprisingly large proportion of rural people do not participate. So far as taking part in organized group activities is concerned, they remain in the backwash while the stream of community life passes them by. A study of more than 2500 farm families in 1945 showed that approximately a fifth of the family heads and the housewives did not participate in any organized group activities during the preceding twelve months (Figure 3). Although nearly 70 percent of those

participating took part in religious group activities, no other single type of group was participated in by more than a fourth of the housewives and family heads. A seventh of the former and a fifth of the latter who participated at all attended less than twelve meetings during the year.

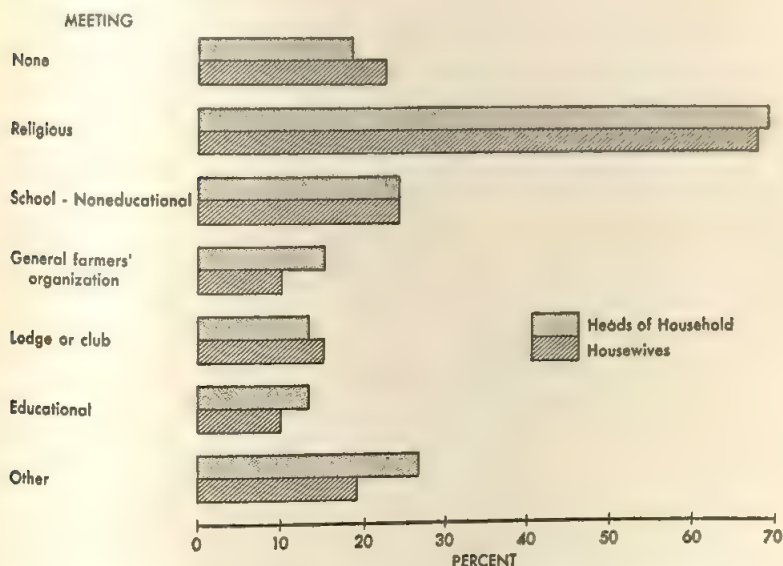


Figure 3. Percentage of Housewives and Heads of Farm Operator Households Reporting Attendance at One or More Meetings of Specified Organizations During Preceding Year, United States, April, 1945. (From United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Trends in Farm Family Levels and Standards of Living*, August, 1947.)

Intensive studies of particular localities in a number of states indicate the same general condition. In a study of nearly 3000 farm operators in four central New York State counties, Anderson¹⁸ found that a fifth belonged to no organization, 29 percent belonged to only one, and 50 percent belonged to two or more.

The situation in the rural counties of other regions is much less

¹⁸ W. A. Anderson, *The Membership of Farmers in New York Organizations*, Cornell University, New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, 1938, Bulletin 695.

favorable. For example, a study of the social participation of people in seven rural Kentucky counties found that five-sixths of the adults had no formal organizational affiliation other than of religious nature, and that one-third of those studied did not even belong to a church. Less than 3 percent of the people in two mountain and two coal-field counties participated in the agricultural extension service programs, and even in the three bluegrass counties studied less than 4 percent took part. Membership in other-than-religious group activities was closely associated with family income. Even more significant was the relationship between years of schooling and the number of organizations in which memberships were held. Persons with an eighth-grade education held twice as many memberships as those with less than four years; high school graduates held three times as many memberships, and college graduates nearly eight times as many, as eighth-grade graduates in other-than-religious groups.¹⁹

The significance of nonparticipation and of low rates of participation in the organized activities of community life cuts more deeply into our social fabric and indicates more educational needs than might appear at first glance. In the first place it is certain that nonparticipants are not finding satisfying substitutes for organized community group life. They may and do engage in informal groups but these, valuable though they may be, do not serve the same purposes as people find in a farm bureau, a civic club, a farm women's group, a music association, or a community choir. In the second place, because participation in community life bears a close relationship with level of education and family income, the nonparticipating family is in a more unfavorable position to maintain a desirable level of family living as measured by the standards our culture associates with good living. With less income the task of maintaining living standards above subsistence levels becomes proportionately greater. The home is less likely to have the labor-saving devices that increase leisure. There is less money for the books, magazines, newspapers, radio, and musical instruments that

¹⁹ Harold F. Kaufman, *Participation in Organized Activities in Selected Kentucky Localities*, University of Kentucky, Agricultural Experiment Station, Lexington, 1949, Bulletin No. 528.

broaden interests and bring greater satisfaction in family living. There is less money for maintenance of family health and less likelihood that any of it will be spent for group health insurance programs. There is less likelihood that advice will be sought from the county agricultural agent, the home demonstration agent, the high school vocational agriculture and homemaking teachers. Membership in a marketing and purchasing coöperative is less likely. Moreover, since level of education is directly related with breadth of interests, the nonparticipating family is less likely to undertake any general program of improvement on its own initiative and without encouragement by others in the community who are able to help.

Thus, more is involved than the educational needs of adults, important as these may be. The needs of children and youth coming from such homes are even more important so far as public school responsibility is concerned and, of course, the task of the schools is much greater and much more difficult to accomplish than it would be under more favorable circumstances. However, the educational needs of the school-age group and those of adults cannot be rightly viewed separate and apart from each other even though the primary responsibility of the schools is with the former. This not only highlights the real and pressing need for realistic programs of adult education but, even more important, it points up the need for schools to develop close working relationships with all worthy community agencies and organizations through which the people take action in improving their ways of living.

This applies with equal force regardless of the degree and variety of social participation of people in community life. Working with the county library association, farmers' organizations, women's clubs, the extension services, welfare and health organizations, civic clubs, and recreational groups is more than good public relations in the commonly used sense of the term. It may represent the most direct and forthright approach to meeting not only the educational needs of pupils but the needs of adults and of the community as well. As educational needs, whether of school-age groups or of adults, come to be viewed from the larger framework of the community and as the job of the school

is regarded in relation to desirable conditions of community living, then the county educational program must of necessity extend far beyond the narrow confines of a traditionally prescribed curriculum.

DEVELOPING OPPORTUNITIES

The county may not have a public library system. The public health program may not be adequate for the needs of the people. There may be great need for a recreational program to offset the influences of commercialized amusements, the public dance hall, and the roadhouse. Many counties have such needs and county educational leaders may view them as requiring urgent action. But the larger problem, the greater educational need, is how the people can work together effectively in arriving at desirable solutions. For if people by working together are able to solve a problem of concern to them, the next one will be easier to solve and they are more likely to recognize it earlier as something requiring their attention. Taking the long view, such an approach has its beginnings in a school program that stresses these attributes in the people it serves.

The School a Problem-Solving Center. The need for a problem-solving approach in learning activities is by no means unique to rural schools, but the need for it is surely as great, and probably greater, than elsewhere. Certainly there is no place in America where the traditional subject-centered curriculum and emphasis on rote learning are more foreign to the interests and needs of children and youth than in rural communities. And certainly there is no place in America where the need for group action on social problems and issues stands in sharper outline, whether the need may be for libraries, recreational centers, health programs, personal and social adjustment, broader and richer cultural activities, or appreciation and creative expression in the arts.

This highlights the great need for rural schools to give young people many opportunities to search out, identify, tackle, and solve real, live problems that bear on the quality of community living. Such a course of action would not be mere practice in preparation for the real thing when schooldays are over and young people move out into the world of work. If the needs of young people and of the community are met,

the action taken must involve problems based on the realities of living in the community. It would also involve an increasing degree of intelligent self-direction on the part of the pupils as experience is gained. Otherwise, the burden of ever learning to stand on their own feet must be borne entirely by them, while one of the most persistent needs of any group is for assistance in learning how to become intelligently self-directing.

Of course, any realistic attempt to solve community problems would be impossible if the pupils and the teachers worked alone and in isolation from other organizations and agencies in the community. It is precisely at this point that another educational need emerges: the need for bringing older youths and adults into the program. Actually, there are two aspects of this particular educational need. In the first place, since many rural people are active in community organizations having varied specialized interests, there is the task of involving these special-interest groups in problems of communitywide concern. In the second place, since a successful attempt in involving organized groups by no means reaches all the people in the community, measures should be taken to reach the nonparticipants.

Coördination of Organized Interest Groups. Significant as they are to the well-being of community life, often there is a very real danger that the groups and organizations in a community may work at cross purposes, duplicate each other's efforts, and leave untouched many of the most pressing community needs. Perhaps the most effective way of indicating how this can be avoided is by describing how this particular need was met in Cedar City, the county-seat trading center for Iron County, Utah. Under the leadership of the county superintendent of schools a series of meetings was held during 1939-1940 to determine more effective ways in dealing with community needs. Out of these discussions a community coördinating council evolved. Every organized group in the community is represented on the council. This council is a planning and policy-making body which holds open meetings every six weeks for discussion of various community problems. A part-time coördinator, employed by the county school system, functions under the direction of the council. At present there are working committees active in the following areas: adult education, health,

recreation, home beautification, music arts concerts, art exhibits, town calendar of events, safety, and UNESCO. Other committees are established as needed and dissolved when their work is done. During the decade of the coördinating council's existence many fine accomplishments have been achieved, including a number of high-quality concerts held every year, broad programs in adult education, annual family living institutes, and a two weeks' art exhibit held each year which has attracted statewide attention and has resulted in the purchase of many fine paintings by families and by county schools.²⁰

The School a Center for Developing and Pursuing Interests. When a rural community gets the kind of school plant needed for its children, that building may become a veritable oasis for nurturing sound processes in improving social living in the community, not only for the pupils enrolled but for everyone in the community as well. In fact, one of the outstanding features of modern school buildings is that they have been designed to serve the entire community on a year-round basis as well as pupils from nine to four o'clock, five days a week, nine months in the year. Gymnasium, auditorium, cafeteria, shops, classrooms, and library all offer opportunities, otherwise unavailable in the typical community, for development and pursuit of interests that improve community living. The lack of such facilities elsewhere in the community points up the great need for putting those in the school to maximum use not only during the regular school day but in the evening, on school holidays, and during the summer vacation months.

Of course, the great immediate need is for a rich program of socializing experiences for the school-age group. The school clubs, hobby groups, intramural teams, dramatics groups, bands and choruses, the school parties, dances, picnics, dinners, and banquets are more than mere fads and frills or so-called extracurricular activities. They are seedbeds for development of democratic social living.

But there is an equally great need, so far as the total pattern of community living is concerned, for giving young people full opportunity to continue pursuit of these interests after they have left school. This

²⁰ Abstracted from information furnished by Mrs. Faye Dix, Community Council Coördinator, Cedar City, Utah.

is the only sure method for keeping intact the thread of continued progress in community living.

SUMMARY

The county educational program, like public education programs everywhere in the nation, has the task of preparing young people for intelligent, socially effective, and personally satisfying citizenship. But the county school system has a number of distinctive social and economic conditions that greatly influence the educational needs of people. Most counties are either entirely or predominantly rural. Agriculture is the mainspring of the economy, but increasing numbers of rural people are moving into nonfarm occupations. The social structure is changing rapidly, taking on more of the characteristics of urban patterns. The standards of living among rural people are approaching those of people living in cities, but the levels of living achieved still lag far behind in many instances. The benefits of social and welfare services, health programs, and better cultural advantages are in increasing demand. These conditions and influences shape and color the kind of educational programs rural people need. They also shape and color the common educational needs listed earlier in the chapter.

1. The communication skills. High-quality performance in reading and writing, speaking, and listening is just as essential for rural young people as those elsewhere. Those having special difficulties need the assistance of specialists such as remedial reading teachers and speech correctionists. The need for a wide variety of reading material indicates the desirability of a county circulating library system. Opportunities for developing oral communication skills must of necessity be very largely provided by schools through a rich and varied program that reaches everyone.

2. Healthy living. There is a very real need for school physicians, nurse-teachers, and dental hygienists. Equally great is the need for the schools to reach out into the homes, working with all members of the family in improving dietary habits, prevention of illness and accidents, and in encouraging establishment of effective county health programs.

3. Personal adjustment and social relationships. There is need for

guidance counselors who do more than counsel on vocational problems. There are many difficult problems in personal and social adjustment confronting rural children and youth. The child who withdraws, the boy from the migratory labor camp, the farm tenant's daughter who is never invited to parties—there is no professionally capable person in the community to whom they can turn. They need expert help from the school.

4. Wholesome family living. The farm home is the nucleus of the agricultural enterprise and its values should be cultivated by the school in all rural young people. The skills, attitudes, and appreciations needed cannot all be learned in the home. All rural girls need courses in homemaking regardless of where they may live or the occupations they may seek in adulthood.

5. Discriminating among values. Newspapers, magazines, movies, and radio glamorize the sensational. The broadcast of the night club orchestra may make the school-community dance seem pretty tame. A thousand voices praise faraway places for everyone who says: You can find complete living here. Discrimination in making wise choices and sound judgments comes not from unthinking practice but from searching out and weighing values—values that surround rural young people in their daily affairs.

6. Critical thinking. Erosion gullies in the fields surround a ramshackle farmhouse; only half the people vote, but they complain about dirty county politics; Jim, who dropped out at the end of ninth grade four years ago, cannot find a job; the children from the migratory labor camp do not seem to like school—when rural young people begin to tackle problems such as these they begin to see cause-and-effect relationships that have real meaning for them. And there is great need for understanding and action on such issues.

7. Understanding the community. The logical place to begin study of geography is right in the home community; the same holds for study of government, social institutions, and economics. Full information about the home locality is essential, but understanding of community processes and how people may work together effectively is equally so. There is little point in trying to develop world understanding until community understanding has been achieved.

8. Democratic participation. The county school system has an unsurpassed opportunity for becoming a laboratory for democratic living. Lay citizens' councils, community coordinating councils, committees of teachers working on matters of school policy and curriculum problems, student government in the schools—all these increase opportunities for democratic participation. But other needs in this area are equally pressing, such as making the school a center for community activities, school cooperation on solving problems of communitywide concern, and utilizing the resources of lay people having special abilities.

9. Appreciation and expression in music and art. The opportunities for most rural young people are much limited, outside of those provided by the school. If they get the opportunities they need, county school systems will provide traveling music and art teachers who will visit every school. Collections of paintings and pictures will be maintained for lending to local schools. Collections of recordings of great music will be established for the same purpose.

10. Using science and technology. The vocational agriculture shop should be a model for the community; the same should be true for the homemaking department. General science, biology, and industrial arts should be strongly oriented toward conditions in the home community, on the farms, and in the homes, with a practical application to solution of real problems.

11. Obtaining security. There is need for rural young people to have a thorough understanding of marketing and purchasing cooperatives and their advantages in maintaining living standards. The same can be said for group health insurance plans; in fact, pupils should be under the protection of this insurance while in school. With family incomes typically lower than the average for the nation, there is great need for a thorough program in consumer education.

12. Vocational preparation. Many young men and women will stay on the farms—they need the best possible preparation for applying scientific and technological advances in kitchen and field so that a high living standard can be maintained. A minority will continue their formal education in colleges and universities—they require thorough preparation for further study. Many will leave the high school directly

to go into nonfarm occupational fields, such as trades and industry, business and distributive occupations—these young people need educational programs giving them opportunity to prepare for their chosen field. All high school youth need a guidance counseling program which will assist them in making vocational choices.

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CHAPTER III

Unity in Democratic Control

In a democratic society power flows from the people. Group ways, group feelings, group desires, and group values of people are translated into social instruments that serve their needs. Agencies, organizations, and institutions, all creatures of the inventive genius of democratic people, are means to ends—not ends in themselves. They have been created through efforts to maintain conditions under which people can work together to best advantage, secure most satisfaction in pursuing their common interests, and utilize their energies most effectively in meeting common needs.

School, church, government, lodge, club, political party, and business organization are but instruments created and sustained by people to serve them. As such their structure and function are modified from time to time as conditions change and new needs arise. If conditions warrant it new instruments are created. Such adaptations are well illustrated by the increase in purchasing and marketing coöperatives in rural areas during recent years, the strengthening of departments of public health and public welfare at state and county governmental levels, and the development of nursery schools, junior colleges, and school camping in the educational program.

FUNCTION OF CONTROL

School government, one of the most commonplace social instruments of democratic people, has been created to bring together pupils

and teachers and the physical resources of a community, county, or state for educational purposes. The kind of educational services desired, the amount and quality of resources available, and the character of the situation in which school government operates determine the nature of its organization and the functions assigned to it. When it performs its functions well, it is regarded as satisfactory school government. When it fails to meet needs that are fully recognized by a working majority of the population, adaptations are made in its structure or function so that desired services can be performed.

The attention given to school legislation by legislative assemblies, the efforts of people to improve local school district reorganization, and the attempts made to improve elementary and secondary schools through internal organization demonstrate clearly that American school government is not a hallowed entity to be revered in awe from afar. At every period in our educational history it has been viewed as a flexible, pliable, dynamic, social instrument that serves the people who created it.

MAINTAINING BALANCE

At almost any given moment there exists in democratic community life many active competing and conflicting interests, diverse loyalties, and divergent viewpoints. A real estate group is interested in keeping school taxes as low as possible. A young mothers' club wants additional classrooms added to the school plant and kindergarten classes established; a business organization insists that vocational courses be added to the curriculum; a literary group wants more emphasis given to art and to the classics; a young-adult club wants the school to provide more recreational advantage; a church group urges the school to restrict recreational activities and to give more attention to what they consider to be the fundamentals. These and other activated interests and desires present in a community at almost any time are the forces which bring about change in viewpoints, change in values, change in function, and change in organization. They are the dynamics of democratic school government. Disturbing as these normal community processes may be to one who likes a smoothly operating organization,

they constitute the fountainhead of educational growth and improvement.

Democratic school government is not a smoothly flowing process. The tides of progress are turbulent, but no farseeing educational leader would have it otherwise. In these conflicting and competing processes of community life lies the energy which makes educational progress possible. But if this energy is to serve useful purposes, it must be coördinated and directed not unlike the sense in which the energy of a wild-flowing mountain stream is harnessed and transformed into light, heat, and power as it is directed into a strategically located turbine. The source of energy is neither diminished nor disturbed, yet the people who had wisdom and foresight enough to direct it into useful channels are greatly benefited.

Maintaining a proper balance between conflicting and competing educational interests at state, county, and local levels is one of the major functions of educational control. Within the internal organization of the school and among the many groups of lay citizens that are directly or indirectly concerned with what the school does and how it operates—concerned with its plant, its equipment, its finances, its curriculum—school government seeks to maintain a balance that gives recognition to the needs and interests of every group and every individual without infringing upon the just rights and privileges or neglecting the needs of anyone.

No group is too small or too insignificant to receive a fair measure of consideration in the policies and program of the well-governed school. Likewise, no group is so powerful or so firmly entrenched that its purposes and policies as they relate to education are not subject to critical examination.

Operating in this capacity, school government must of necessity at times exert restricting influences. Enthusiasm generated by a winning basketball team, a colorful high school band, or a successful vocational department that leads groups of people to insist on putting a disproportionately large share of the community's educational resources into these particular phases of the educational program while other less spectacular parts of the program are neglected—these are well-recog-

nized examples of situations in which school government must exert restraining influences.

STIMULATING ACTION

The activating or stimulating influences exerted by school government are equally important in maintaining a proper balance among the multiplicity of forces in a state, county, or local community that shape the character of the school. A local district seeks teachers with higher professional preparation because of state-wide standards of certification that are enforced or because of special inducements in a formula for distributing state school money. A county superintendent working within the framework of state school legislations assists local communities to reorganize their local administrative units. New courses are added to the curriculum, extra levies are voted, and the quality of pupil transportation service is gradually improved as school government encourages people to act for better schools.

RELEASING ENERGIES

The function of educational control is by no means limited to maintaining a balance among educational forces. While this function is important and necessary to satisfactory operation of the school, it is a limited concept of control—a concept which seems to imply manipulation and management by persons endowed with unusual foresight.

Sound educational control has a much broader and more far-reaching purpose. It seeks to bring about conditions in which the material resources of the state, county, and local district and the creative energies of people can function to the best possible advantage in the solution of their educational problems and in meeting their educational needs. The older teacher's intimate acquaintance with the traditions, mores, and value patterns of community life, the animating spirit of the younger teacher just out of college, the visions of high school youngsters, the skills of artisans in shops and industries, the experience of the businessman, and the sympathetic understanding of the mother of a large family of children are priceless educational resources. It is through the free and easy contributions of people such as these that depth and quality are built into the educational program. An eroded

hillside near a rural school, a wooded glen teeming with plant and animal life, and a plumbing shop on a village street merely suggest the wide range of physical resources that are available in every community whether it be large or small.

Educational control functioning at its best maintains situations in which everybody concerned with the school contributes his thinking freely and works at his best. It does not imply nor does it lead to a condition in which a state government dominates the educational scene, an aggressive county organization wrests control away from local administrative units, or large local districts disregard the interests and desires of citizens living in outlying hamlets and neighborhoods. To the contrary, its primary purpose is to maintain balance among the many interest groups in society, to relieve tensions, to release creative energies, to coördinate effort, and to ensure that every segment of community life is fairly and adequately represented in the educational program.

ORGANIZATION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL

The administrative organization developed in the different states over the years through which people exercise administrative control over public schools differs widely. In thirty-six states there are three levels of administrative control—state, intermediate (the county in most instances), and the local district. In the twelve county-unit states—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, New Mexico, North Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, and West Virginia—there are but two levels of administrative control. These are the state organization at the head of each state school system and the local district through which local control is exercised. All schools in the State of Delaware, with the exception of fifteen independent districts, are administered directly by the state. The administrative and supervisory functions commonly assigned to the county superintendent's office in intermediate district states are performed by staff members of the state department of education in Nevada, hence there is no intermediate district organization in this state.

There are at present about 72,000 local administrative units and 3350 intermediate districts in the entire country. These administrative

units together with the forty-eight state organizations constitute the legal framework within which the administrative control of public education is exercised.

The local administrative unit is the school district that is closest to the people. It is comprised of an area in which a board of education or a chief school officer has responsibility for the direct administration of all schools located therein. Within a single local administrative unit, as for example in a large county unit, there may be as many as fifty local attendance areas, areas in which the people are served by a single school. On the other hand, in many instances, the geographic area included within the local administrative unit and the attendance area is identical.

In sections of the country where local school district reorganization has lagged behind developments in transportation and communication or has failed to make adjustments to population change, there are many local administrative units that do not operate schools. For example, in the State of Minnesota during the school year of 1947-1948 there were 2418 local¹ administrative units that had closed their schools and had arranged for the education of the children they served in neighboring districts. In such instances a single attendance area may include several local administrative units.

LOCAL DISTRICTS

The great diversity in the size and character of local administrative units led the National Commission on School District Reorganization to classify them into the following broad categories largely on the basis of their relationship to other units of government:

1. *The common school district* is not necessarily coterminous with any other units of government. By far the largest number of school districts in the country are included in this classification.
2. *The city school district* may or may not be coterminous with the boundaries of a municipality, but the city or town included within its boundaries serves the purpose of identifying it. It is usually a corporation that is wholly or largely independent of city government.

¹ The Minnesota Institute of Governmental Research, Inc., *Improving Education in Minnesota by Reorganizing Local School Systems*, the Institute, St. Paul, January, 1949, Research Bulletin No. 25, p. 20.

3. *The town or township district* is usually coterminous with the boundaries of a political unit of government. In New England, where the town is the local unit of government, it likewise constitutes the local school district. In Indiana the local school district in rural areas is comprised of the township. While it is by no means the common pattern of local school district organization, there are township districts in Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.
4. *The county unit district* is comprised of a civil county. In two of the so-called county unit states the local school district, even in rural areas, is not in every instance coterminous with the county. The local district in Virginia, known as a division in some instances, includes parts of two or more counties. Only twenty-four of the forty districts in Utah have boundary lines identical with civil counties.
5. *High school districts* have been created in several states for the specific purpose of providing high school facilities. There are frequently a number of smaller administrative units within these special high school districts that exercise administrative control over elementary education.²

ASSIGNMENT OF FUNCTIONS

Assignment of functions to the different levels of administrative control in state school systems has been one of the most persistent problems in American public education. Repeatedly this problem has been faced by people in every state as they have enacted legislation and taken community action in reorganizing local school districts into larger administrative units, making needed changes in school financial plans, adding new elements to the curriculum, and raising standards for physical plant and equipment. Out of the experiences of people in dealing with this problem from many different viewpoints have emerged the following generally accepted guiding principles:

1. Final authority and responsibility for administrative control of public education rest with the people but are exercised through action at the state level.
2. Administrative control of public education should stand separate and apart from branches of government which are responsive to general political elections at regular intervals.

² Howard A. Dawson and others, *Your School District*, the Report of the National Commission on School District Reorganization, Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1948, pp. 49-50.

3. With effectiveness of performance being equal, functions tend to be assigned to the level of control which is closest to the people. Assignments are made from lower to higher levels of control to secure greater efficiency and to effect economy.
4. Administrative control is not merely a regulatory, restricting, and limiting device; its most important purpose is to release the energies of people, stimulate creative powers to action for constructive use, and co-ordinate the use of educational resources.
5. Administrative control is sensitive to established patterns of social organization and social values viewing the school, particularly in rural areas, as one of the dominant community institutions.
6. Sound administrative organization is not a static, permanently fixed entity. The school functions in a social scene that is constantly undergoing fundamental change. Newly arising educational needs demand new services. Consequently, educational controls must be responsive to change.
7. The stronger the local and intermediate district units of administration are, the less need there is for assigning functions to the state level of control. Strong basic administrative units is one of the greatest safeguards the public schools can have against loss of local control.

EDUCATIONAL CONTROLS AT THE STATE LEVEL

There are three general avenues through which people in the various states exercise educational controls at the state level. These are (1) state constitutional provisions, (2) state legislative action, and (3) action of state boards of education and state departments of education.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

Broad general provisions for the establishment and maintenance of public schools have been made in each state constitution. The following excerpts from the Constitution of the State of Idaho illustrate the general character of these provisions:

All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for their equal protection and benefit, and they have the right to alter, reform or abolish the same whenever they may deem it necessary, and no special privileges or immunities shall ever be granted that may not be altered, revoked, or repealed by the legislature.³

³ State Department of Education, "Constitution of the State of Idaho," *School Laws of the State of Idaho*, the Department, Boise, August, 1941, Vol. XXVII, No. 2.

The stability of a republican form of government depending mainly upon the intelligence of the people, it shall be the duty of the legislature of Idaho, to establish and maintain a general, uniform and thorough system of public, free common schools.⁴

Provisions have been made in many state constitutions which deal with specific educational problems and procedures for administrative control that concern people throughout the state, such as:

1. Establishment of the offices of state superintendent of public instruction and the county superintendent.
2. Management of public school lands and permanent school funds.
3. Limitations on the bonded indebtedness of local school districts.
4. Protection against the infringements of the right to freedom of conscience insofar as instruction in the public schools is concerned and separation of the functions of church and state in the management of the schools.
5. Segregation of races in the public schools.

The action of the people of a state expressed in their state constitution tends toward permanency and inflexibility, thus adding to the difficulty of making needed adjustments to changing conditions. For this reason constitutional provisions serve the educational interests of the people in the state best when they deal with broad policy rather than with details of operation and management. In recent years a number of states have been in serious difficulty because of constitutional provisions which fix the salaries of school officials, limit bonded indebtedness for school building purposes, and prohibit state superintendents of public instruction and county superintendents from continuing in office for two or more successive terms.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Statewide current educational problems are dealt with through the state legislature. Rapid changes in social and economic life and the efforts being made to adjust the organization and operation of schools to changing conditions have, in recent years, greatly extended the scope of educational problems which people in the different states have tried to solve through legislative action. School legislation in most states has been so extensive and so varied that even an extended list

⁴ *Ibid.*, Article IX, Section 1.

could no more than suggest the range and character of educational problems being faced. The following examples of legislation pertaining to education enacted by the 1946 and 1947 sessions of the California legislature are merely illustrative:

1. Education of physically handicapped children
2. Certification of school psychologists
3. Salaries of school administrators
4. Reorganization of local school districts
5. State aid for construction of school buildings
6. Apportionment of state school money
7. Levy rates in local school districts
8. Organization of junior colleges
9. Operation of kindergartens
10. Provisions for adult education
11. Transportation of children to and from school
12. Teacher retirement
13. School safety patrols
14. Supervisory services in rural schools⁵

This is only a small part of the educational problems on which action was taken in this state during two sessions of the legislature. The scope of educational problems acted upon by legislatures in other states is comparable.

ACTION THROUGH STATE BOARDS OF EDUCATION

Educational problems of concern to the entire state that involve technical detail, and that call for prompt decisions and exercise of discretionary powers tempered with professional judgment, can be dealt with most advantageously through action of state boards and state departments of education. There is a state department of education headed by a chief state school officer in every state. The functions of state departments are largely administrative and supervisory.

In 1949 there were forty state boards of education. The eight states which did not have state boards of education were Illinois, Iowa, Ne-

⁵ Alfred E. Lentz (administrative adviser), *Laws of 1946 and 1947 Relating to the California Public School System*, Bulletin of the State Department of Education, Sacramento, November, 1947, Vol. XVI, No. 4, pp. 1-261.

braska, North Dakota, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Each of these states, however, had a state board of vocational education which exercised administrative control over vocational education. Most of these states had additional boards which exercised administrative control over institutions of higher learning.

Experience in state school systems as well as in local districts has proven that public education will be served to the best advantage if boards of education function as policy-forming bodies. Administrative responsibilities should be delegated to a chief executive officer. This can be accomplished only where the board selects an executive officer without restrictions who serves at the pleasure of the board.

The following principles governing the organization and functioning of boards are generally accepted by educational leaders:

1. Members of the board should be selected on a nonpartisan basis, preferably by popular vote at a special nonpolitical election.
2. The chief executive officer should be selected by the board without regard to place of residence, race, color, creed, or politics.
3. The board should determine the professional qualifications of the chief executive officer.
4. Compensation of the chief executive officer should be fixed by the board within broad limits established by law.
5. Broad powers and duties related to administrative control of the state school system should be delegated to the chief executive officer by the board.
6. Within the framework of policy adopted by the board the chief executive officer should be empowered to employ a competent staff and assign responsibility.
7. The chief executive officer should be responsible to the board.

There is little resemblance to uniformity among the different states in functions assigned to state boards of education, although most of them exercise some measure of control over elementary and secondary schools. Perhaps, because of the increasing complexity of educational problems, there has been a tendency in recent years to delegate more powers and duties to state boards. Reeder has pointed out that boards in New England and the Middle Atlantic states have more numerous

and a wider scope of functions than boards in other sections of the United States.⁶

Functions commonly assigned to state boards of education are:

1. Regulation of teacher education
2. Adoption of textbooks
3. Prescription of standards for the certification of teachers
4. Supervision of vocational education
5. Establishment of standards governing the granting of degrees and diplomas
6. Adoption of courses of study
7. Apportionment of state school funds
8. Regulation of correspondence work in colleges and high schools
9. Control of state library service
10. Management of state retirement systems

INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT FUNCTIONS

Between the state administrative organization at the head of the school system in each state and the local district organization that is closest to the people there is an intermediate level of administrative control in thirty-four states. Functions assigned to the intermediate district have been, until recent years, largely of a supervisory nature. The superintendent of the intermediate district has been regarded as an arm of the state department of education located strategically to assist in carrying out state policies. In many states a part or all of his salary has been paid out of state funds. He is usually required to make reports to the state department of education concerning conditions in his district at regular intervals and is frequently called into conferences with state department officials.

On the other hand, this office has acquired many local characteristics. The superintendent is selected locally either by popular election or through appointment by a board or boards. Office space and all or part of his travel expenses are provided by local or county governmental units. In many states, unfortunately, there is a residence qualification for eligibility to office. It is a common requirement in the school law

⁶ Ward G. Reeder, *The State Board and State Department of Education*, Ohio Education Association, Columbus, 1939, p. 7.

that he visit and become familiar with all schools in the district. He is regarded by the lay people in the area he serves as the leader and spokesman for education.

Functions commonly assigned to the intermediate district level of control include:

1. Alteration of school district boundaries
2. Apportionment and payment of public school money to local districts
3. Maintenance of safe and healthy conditions in school buildings and on school grounds
4. Supervision of instruction
5. Compiling and reporting information concerning the operation of schools
6. Transfer of pupils from one school to another
7. Maintenance of satisfactory school financial and statistical accounting in local districts

LOCAL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

The strong sentiment for local control of public education is deeply rooted in the cultural backgrounds of American life. The American public school was born in a small frontier settlement and was nurtured, during the early years of its existence, through the coöperative efforts of neighborhood and community groups. It was in its beginning, and is now, a reflection of the ideas and ideals of a people who placed a high value on the worth and dignity of every person, and who profoundly believed that individuals and communities of people could shape their stations in life if freedom of thought and action was maintained and the will to do something worth while was kept alive.

Education was made a state function only because of its supreme importance to the well-being of a democratic society. Functions have been assigned to state and intermediate district levels for efficiency and economy of operation. Local initiative, freedom of action, and the right of the people in the local districts to make uninhibited choices between alternative possibilities have been jealously guarded at every step in the development of public education. Even though the principle of education as a state function has been generally accepted and has been upheld repeatedly by court decisions, there is the widespread belief

that the organization, operation, and control of schools are functions of the local community and that there is something inherently good in local control.

In every state local boards of education have far-reaching authority for the control of elementary and secondary schools. They select and employ teachers and prescribe qualifications that extend beyond minimum state requirements; they fix the opening and closing dates of schools and determine the adequacy of buildings and equipment; they arrange for children to be transported to and from school and determine the kind of learning opportunities the school provides. Salaries of employees, budgetary appropriations, levying of rates; textbooks, instructional supplies, laboratory equipment; school lunches, health services, and high school athletics are all controlled in a large measure by the people in the local districts through their boards of education and by direct community action. An examination of the scope and character of functions performed by small rural districts as well as larger city administrative units reveals that the control of most educational functions rests with the local school district.

WHERE FUNCTIONS CAN BEST BE PERFORMED

It can almost be said that there are no public schools other than those operated in local administrative units. Intermediate districts and state administrative organizations are in effect service agencies contributing to their efficient and effective operation. The state is the people working together as a unit in patterns established by the agencies, organizations, and institutions they have created. The people as a whole have accepted education as a state responsibility and have given the school status as an institution. This general responsibility could be established best at the state level of administrative organization and control. The numerous functions involved in the operation of the schools have been assigned to levels of control where they can best be performed.

The people might have chosen to perform the function of financing public education at the state level or intermediate district level, but this function was first made a responsibility of the local district. It

was only in recent years, after the concept of equalization of educational opportunity and support was accepted, that the function of financing schools began to be shared by higher levels of administrative control—first by the intermediate district and later by the state level. During the ten-year period from 1937–1938 to 1947–1948, state contributions to the support of schools increased from 29.6 percent to 39.8 percent of total expenditures.⁷ In fifteen states more than half the cost of operating the schools in 1948 was met through state appropriations.

The people in any state might well have chosen to use the state or intermediate district levels of administration to employ teachers, to build the curriculum, to select school sites, to construct school buildings, or to purchase instructional supplies. But from their experience, people in most states have deemed it to be of best interest to the schools to assign major responsibility for the performance of these functions to the local district.

As it has become apparent through experience that a function cannot be performed satisfactorily at the level of administrative organization where it was first located, responsibility has been shifted to a level of control where it can be performed to better advantage. We have witnessed the shifting of the responsibility for certification of teachers from the local unit to the intermediate district and finally to the state level in most states. Pupil transportation, which was begun as a local district function, is gradually being recognized as an intermediate district and state responsibility. The "intermediate district law" enacted by the New York State Legislature in 1948 definitely makes pupil transportation an intermediate district function. Practically all states exercise some control over transportation through prescribing standards for equipment that is purchased by boards or that is operated by contractors.

In determining where responsibility for the performance of a function shall be assigned, the important question in the thinking of the people of a state who make the decision through their representatives

⁷ The Council of State Governments, *The Forty-Eight State School Systems*, the Council, Chicago, 1949, Table 48, p. 224.

or by direct action is, "Where can it best be done?" Not infrequently responsibility is divided. For example, in the construction of rural school buildings major responsibility rests with the local district, but the intermediate district superintendent may be called upon to assist in selecting the site and the state will approve the plans. There is a growing tendency for the state to share in the cost of the building. Sixteen states now have appropriations from which contributions can be made toward the construction of public school buildings.

Responsibility is frequently shared between local and intermediate districts in the provision of library facilities, health education services, supervision of instruction, and in-service education of teachers. There are functions that can be performed best by people working together on the basis of face-to-face relationships in their local communities. Other functions, equally important to the schools, must be assigned to the intermediate district or state level. Determining where or in what manner an educational function is performed is not a matter following precedent or of adhering to the demands of people with vested interests. It is simply a matter of getting things done in the right way with the greatest efficiency and economy and to the best interest of the people who are dependent upon the schools for their educational opportunities. This is common sense. This is the principle which has guided the American people in the development of the public schools.

There is nothing inherently good or bad in any particular level of administrative control. Each organizational unit is but a device which the people of the state as a whole have created to assist them in working together in developing and sustaining the educational program they envision for their children and for themselves. Its usefulness to each individual, to each community, and to the entire state and nation depends upon the extent to which it ministers to the educational needs of the people. Each and every device for administrative control is an integral part of a single structure of administrative organization. It is not one or the other, but all of them, functioning in the manner in which the people of the state deem it best to use them. When conditions change so that any level of administrative control is not serving

the people well, its functions and its structure will be changed in the future as they have been in the past.

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A statement of policies, programs, and administrative relationships pertinent to the organization and operation of state school systems.

CHAPTER IV

The Intermediate District of School Administration

The intermediate district is an administrative organization that has been established and functions intermediately between the state department of education and the local school districts. Its distinguishing characteristics are (1) that it serves an area comprised of two or more local districts operating as distinct and separate administrative units; (2) that it is not a quasi-corporate unit having direct responsibility for the operation of schools; (3) that it provides supervisory and service functions which are supplementary to the educational programs maintained by local districts; and (4) that it serves in the capacity of an arm of the state department of education by bringing state administrative control closer to situations existing in the local districts.

An intermediate district may be defined as a unit of school administration that performs administrative and supervisory functions and provides supplementary educational services in a designated area comprised of two or more local administrative units.

There are three general types of intermediate districts: (1) the county, (2) the supervisory union or supervisory district comprised of a number of towns, and (3) the township.

NEED FOR AN INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT

The intermediate district has been in existence in some form almost from the beginning of organized state school systems. With education clearly recognized and established as a state function and a marked

tendency toward the development of small local districts to which responsibility was delegated for the direct operation of the schools, the need for a level of administration in an intermediate position between the state government at the head of the school system and the local school district closest to the people was recognized as constitutions were adopted and state systems of public education began to form. Information relative to the condition of buildings, school population, enrollments, programs of study, certification, and expenditures was almost nonexistent. Without such knowledge, state superintendents of public instruction with their inadequate staffs faced an almost impossible task of giving constructive leadership in a state school system comprised of hundreds, and in many cases thousands, of small local administrative units. The urgent need for gathering such data and compiling them into intelligible reports was an important factor in the early establishment of the intermediate level of school administration.

But the need for this level of administration was by no means limited to gathering and compiling factual information and transmitting it to state departments of education. School lands that were gifts of the federal government had to be look after. In many instances, there were state school funds to be apportioned and accounted for. Local school district boundary lines had to be established and the many inevitable controversies on school matters could not be taken to the state department for settlement. Furthermore, there was need for a school official more familiar with local school conditions than the state superintendent could possibly be to see that legal requirements concerning the organization and operation of schools became effective. It was these slender threads extending outward slowly and cautiously from the state government that gradually wove the programs of hundreds of small local districts into a school system that had strength, stability, and unity. The intermediate district, in a very real sense, is the loom that has woven the fabric.

Clearly, the intermediate district began as an adjunct of the state level of school government—as a downward extension of administrative control. This level of school administration was established in response to felt needs in the administration of state school systems. In no other area of school government is there a clearer indication of

the willingness of people to experiment, to make modifications in an instrument of government so that it can serve them better. Because of frequent adaptations, the development of the intermediate district has been an evolutionary process, in most states, as it passed from one stage to another.

AN EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS

A brief overview of the process in New York State, wherein the intermediate district has been gradually and continuously shaped through a century and a half of public education, brings into the forefront many of the forces and issues which have been important in shaping the character and function of this level of school administration in every part of the country.

The New York State education law of 1795, which gave legality and encouragement to an association of taxpayers in a community for the organization and operation of schools, provided for town school commissioners who apportioned state school money among the several districts in the town, conferred with district trustees concerning the qualifications of teachers, and exercised a measure of supervisory control over the programs of study. Recognition of these intermediate functions in this early school legislation was, perhaps, the first legal basis for an intermediate district administrative organization.¹

This law was in effect only five years. Efforts made to extend it were unsuccessful. But with the enactment of the general education law in 1812, which created the first state superintendent of common schools, provision was again made for three town school commissioners in addition to the trustees elected in the local districts. The chief responsibilities of the town commissioners were to subdivide the towns into local districts and to inquire into the moral and educational qualifications of teachers. Uniqueness in the functions to be performed was, undoubtedly, the basis for establishing this official position. These were responsibilities that could not be met by the local districts, and the people

¹ For the factual information included in this discussion, the writer is indebted to Thomas Dudley Brooks, "The Supervisory District," *Administration and Supervision*, Rural School Survey of New York State, Cornell University, Ithaca, 1923, Ch. VII.

were unwilling to delegate them to the state level of administrative control.

It is worthy of note that the issue of state versus local control and the problem of securing efficiency in operation without losing touch with the local citizens concerned were in evidence in this early school legislation. Their significance has not diminished with the years. Wherever attempts are being made to reshape or to make adaptations in the administrative structure of state school systems, they continue to be the focal points of controversy.

After two years of experience with an intermediate district in the embryo stage of development under town commissioners, the New York law was modified to provide for town inspectors to work with the town commissioners. Presumably, the commissioners served in the capacity of a town board with the inspectors acting in the capacity of administrative officials. The concept of a single official serving as an executive officer of a board was not yet in evidence. The actual management of schools as well as formulating policies which governed their organization and operation were conceived to be functions of laymen.

ADMINISTRATIVE LAY BOARD GIVES WAY TO AN INDIVIDUAL

The positions of town commissioners and town inspectors continued uninterrupted in New York until 1841. At this time legislation was enacted which provided for a deputy superintendent who was appointed by the county board of supervisors. Half of the superintendent's salary was paid from state funds and the remainder by the county. After almost a half century of experimentation followed by modifications, the intermediate level of school administration in New York State had evolved from a town board of laymen to a single administrative officer with a measure of administrative responsibility extending throughout an entire county. This legislation marked the transition of administrative leadership and control at the intermediate district level from a board of laymen to a single individual who was, presumably, a professional official.

At this time, the concept of supervision as contrasted with inspection was recognized. Among the several duties with which the superintendent was charged were the responsibility for promoting sound

education, elevating the qualifications of teachers, and improving the means of instruction.

FEAR OF STATE ENCROACHMENT ON LOCAL CONTROL

The deputy superintendency was unpopular in the state from the beginning because, perhaps, it smacked too strongly of the encroachment of state government on local control of the educational program. The title "deputy superintendent" in itself was some indication that this official was regarded as an arm of the state department of education. The fact that part of his salary was paid from state funds, at a time when state support of local schools was much less common than now, undoubtedly strengthened this viewpoint. At any rate, legislation with obvious intent of strengthening the town as an intermediate unit of administration was enacted in 1843; it abolished the town commissioners and town inspectors and created a town superintendent.

For a brief period of time the state had two intermediate levels of administration—the town and the county—with the deputy superintendent serving at the county level and the town superintendent at the town level. But the deputy superintendency which served the entire county was soon discontinued and the town again constituted the only intermediate district in the state.

Meanwhile, with an increasing rural population, the school system continued to grow rapidly. The burden placed on the state department of education of maintaining easy and accurate lines of communication with the many small local districts through almost 900 town superintendents became too great to bear. As a result, the town superintendency was abolished in 1856 and the county again became the intermediate district.

By this legislation the county superintendency became an elective office by a countywide popular vote and the state assumed full responsibility for salary payments. There was almost a blanket transfer of duties and responsibilities from the town superintendency to the county superintendency. The people of the state had learned in the school of experience the necessity for placing intermediate administrative responsibilities at a level higher than the local town.

With modifications from time to time, which generally added to the

functions of the county intermediate district and led to a higher professional status for the superintendent, this law continued in effect for a period of more than fifty years until the present district superintendency was created.

SUPERVISION TAKES PRECEDENCE

In 1910 the county as an intermediate district was abolished and a supervisory district comprised of a number of towns was created. This law provided that all territory in the state outside of cities with a population of 4500 or more was to be included in a supervisory district. The boundaries of civil towns were respected to the extent that no town could be divided in the formation of the supervisory districts and all territory included had to be contiguous. The actual allocation of territory to the various districts was made jointly by the state commissioner of education and the county commissioners in each county. Initially 208 supervisory districts were created. The number has been reduced over the years through consolidation until there were only 158 in 1950. The superintendent is selected by a district board of school directors which has no other function. His salary, up to \$3500 plus \$600 travel expenses, is paid by the state.² He is directly responsible to the state commissioner of education.

ISSUES INVOLVED

This brief account of the development of the intermediate district in New York State has a counterpart in almost every state. The character of legislation enacted and the length and frequency of the steps taken have, of course, varied and been peculiar to existing conditions in each state, but the basic issues considered and the steps followed have been much alike. A review of this evolutionary process over a period of almost a century and a half of American public education shows that:

1. Recognition of education as a state function with a rapidly growing number of small local districts created a need for an intermediate level

² J. E. Butterworth, "The Evolution of Rural School Organization in New York State," *Your School District*, the Report of the National Commission on School District Reorganization, Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1948, p. 206.

of administration to facilitate communication between the state government and the local school units.

2. In the initial stages of development, the intermediate district was regarded, primarily, as an arm of the state department of education—as a downward extension of state administrative control.
3. The development has been landmarked with evidence of the trend toward transfer of administrative functions from a lay board to a professional officer. Gradually, there has been a delineation of the functions of a professional school officer as compared with the functions of a lay board. Formulation of policy, expression of popular interest and desire, and exercise of discretionary powers have come to be accepted as the rightful functions of the lay board. Execution of policy, performance of defined functions, giving technical and professional counsel and advice, and providing stimulating leadership have, on the other hand, come to be regarded as the appropriate functions of the professional school officer.
4. Progress has been slow because of the jealousy with which local districts have guarded the right to local control of the educational program and the resentment they have shown toward any development that looked like state encroachment on this right.
5. People have tended to place more and more responsibility on the intermediate district administrative officer as the educational program has developed.
6. With increasing complexity of educational problems, measures have been taken to gradually raise the prestige and qualifications of the intermediate district administrative officer.
7. As with every other phase of school government, the people have viewed the intermediate district as an implement of their own creation to be used by them in organizing and operating an educational program. When this implement has not served them well, it has been modified in an attempt to make it function better.
8. The intermediate district is essentially an administrative organization for serving rural people.

COUNTY INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT

The strong position the county holds in the American plan of government has been, without doubt, influential in making the county by far the most common type of intermediate district. With the excep-

tion of the twelve county-unit states and Delaware and Nevada, which have no intermediate districts, and the New England states and New York, in which the intermediate district is comprised of a combination of towns, the county constitutes an intermediate district of school administration throughout the country.

In all states where the county is an intermediate district there is a county superintendent of schools who, in most instances, is elected by popular vote. His office is usually located in the county courthouse. His official status is comparable to that of such other county governmental officials as sheriff, assessor, treasurer, and recorder. His office staff is usually limited to clerical and stenographic assistants.

Such generalizations, even though well grounded, fail to reflect the true significance and actual status of the county intermediate district in public school administration. In many instances, the county superintendent is selected by a board of education which exercises as much care and discrimination in its efforts to secure a capable, well-qualified educational leader as a city school board does in selecting a superintendent. Examples could be cited readily of counties in which the office is well equipped and staffed by a corps of specialists who provide a wide range of educational services.

In thirteen³ states—Arkansas, California, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Mississippi, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin—there are county boards of education which serve with the county superintendent in the administration of the intermediate district. In some of these states the responsibilities of county boards of education are limited to the performance of specially designated functions, as, for example, in Wisconsin⁴ where the responsibilities of the county board extend only to reorganization of local school districts following public hearings, calling the first annual meeting in newly formed districts, establishing tuition rates for children living in nonoperating school districts, and approving transportation routes. In other states, county boards of education have been given

³ Howard A. Dawson and others, *Your School District*, the Report of the National Commission on School District Reorganization, Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1948, p. 53.

⁴ Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, *A Summary of 1949 Wisconsin Laws*, the Alliance, Madison, 1949, p. 66.

broad and comprehensive powers for forming policy and shaping the county educational program.

The intermediate district organization in the following selected states illustrates various stages of its development influenced by changes in the character of local districts, methods of financing, gradual specialization of professional educational services, and increasing demands for better educational opportunities in rural areas.

A STRONG INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT

The legal framework for county school administration in the State of Iowa⁵ illustrates the character of functions and responsibilities assigned to county boards of education in a strong type of intermediate district. In Iowa a county board of education consisting of five members is elected by popular vote. For this election purpose, the entire county is divided into four election areas. One member of the board is elected in each area and one is elected at large from the entire county school system for a term of six years.

Under the provisions of this law the county school system embraces all the public schools of the county except independent and consolidated school districts that maintain four-year high schools. An independent or consolidated district may become a part of the county system by a favorable vote of the citizens in the district.

The county board of education appoints the county superintendent of schools, fixes his salary and traveling expenses, and determines the budget for his office. The board may appoint an assistant county superintendent and such other professional and clerical assistants as are deemed necessary for the satisfactory operation of the schools in the county.

On recommendation of the county superintendent, the county board employs an attendance officer, sets his salary, and fixes his duties within limits prescribed by law; approves the curriculum; adopts textbooks and provides for their distribution; establishes regulations governing the operation of county libraries; and enforces laws, rules, and

⁵ State Department of Public Instruction, *School Laws of Iowa*, the Department, Des Moines, 1948, pp. 140-147.

regulations of the state department of education for the transportation of children to and from the public schools.

After consideration of the budget proposal made by the county superintendent, the county board certifies to the county board of supervisors the amount needed. The law makes it mandatory that the county board of supervisors lay a levy on taxable property in the county sufficiently high to raise the funds called for in the budget. The receipts go into a special fund called the county board of education fund. This levying power is one of the strongest features in the Iowa intermediate district. It is this provision which puts the county superintendent and the county board of education in a position to plan and carry forward a sound educational program.

Within this legal framework the county board of education, acting through the chief executive officer, has almost unrestricted opportunities for developing a high-quality professional staff and providing educational services that supplement the programs in the local districts. The most significant restricting feature of the law is that the county school system shall not exercise any controls or assume any functions that are in conflict with the powers and duties assigned to local district boards. Clearly, the local district is given preëminence in the assignment of responsibilities for the direct operation of schools. It is only those functions which cannot be performed by it satisfactorily that are assigned to the intermediate district level of administrative organization.

BALANCE BETWEEN LOCAL AND STATE INFLUENCE

The method of selecting the county superintendent of schools and electing the members of the county board of education in Pennsylvania definitely ties county school administration to local district administrative organization. The county superintendent of schools is elected for a four-year term of office by a convention of all the directors of local school districts in the county that do not employ a superintendent. His basic salary, which is set by law on the basis of the total population of the county in which he serves, is paid by the state. Likewise, travel expenses of county superintendents, assistant county superintendents, and county supervisors of instruction are paid out of state appropria-

tions. These provisions for salary and travel expenses indicate that to a considerable extent county school administration in this state is regarded as an arm of the state department of public instruction.

The five-member county board of education, known in Pennsylvania⁶ as the county board of school directors, is, like the county superintendent, elected by the local district directors in a general convention. No person is eligible for membership on the county board who is not a member of a local district board in the county. Membership of the county board, the methods of election, and the procedures followed in choosing the county superintendent indicate the close relationship of county school administration to the local community.

The county board of education in Pennsylvania meets in at least ten regular meetings during the year and in such special meetings as the county superintendent may call. Office space, supplies and equipment, and necessary stenographic services for the county board and county superintendent are provided by the county civil government. The county superintendent is chief executive officer of the board and is an ex officio member of all its special committees.

The duties and responsibilities assigned to the county level of school administration in Pennsylvania are both administrative and supervisory in nature. The county board is responsible for inspecting and approving budgets of the local districts, approving transportation routes and contracts, apportioning transportation costs, recommending the approval or disapproval of school building sites, preparing plans for the reorganization of local administrative units and attendance areas, establishing a uniform system of accounting, advising with local boards on the enforcement of the compulsory attendance law, and conducting special educational studies and research. Provisions are made for providing supervision of instruction and supervision of special education classes through the county superintendent's office.

AN EMERGING COUNTY BOARD

There are many variations in the organization of county intermediate districts. In Indiana, where the civil township constitutes a

⁶ Pennsylvania State Department of Public Instruction, *School Laws of Pennsylvania*, the Department, Harrisburg, 1949, pp. 118-137.

local school district in rural areas of the state, a single local district trustee performs the functions commonly assigned to local district boards of education. The trustees of the several townships in each county, meeting together in a single body, constitute a county board of education. The most important function of this board is the appointment of the county superintendent. But in addition to this function, by coöperative agreement among the several districts represented on the board of supervisors, personnel can be employed and various types of professional services can be provided on a shared basis in the different districts in the county.

This is an example of a county board of education in the formative stage. The members of this board serve in an *ex officio* capacity; each member tends to act as a representative of a particular district rather than as a member of a board with distinctive responsibilities for a countywide educational body; the board is not a corporate body; it has no levying powers; and its functions as a body, except for the election of the county superintendent, tend to be subordinate to the functions of each individual member who individually acts in the capacity of a lay board in a particular district. But even with its serious organizational limitations this board is a valuable aid to the county superintendent in focusing attention on educational problems and channeling lay interests in the program of county educational leadership.

A well-organized county board of representative laymen is an essential feature of effective county school administration. In states where there are no county boards, the functions commonly assigned to the intermediate district level of school administration are (1) performed by the county superintendent without the advice and counsel of representative laymen; (2) delegated to the state department of education; (3) left with local districts long after they have ceased to perform them effectively; (4) delegated to noneducational officials, boards, or agencies in the county. For example, county boards of health assume responsibility for the employment of school nurse-teachers in situations where the local districts are not strong enough to provide this service and where the intermediate district organization is too weak to perform this function; mutual health programs are operated by county boards of supervisors; state departments of education become responsi-

ble for approving local school transportation routes or passing judgment on the soundness of contractual arrangements for transporting children to and from school; small local school districts overreach their budgetary resources in employing speech correctionists and music supervisors, or do without these services; and county superintendents are forced to exercise discretionary power and judgment beyond the limits of sound principles of school administration. Any and all of these procedures have serious limitations, and if continued over a long period of time will be reflected in meager educational opportunities for rural people.

A WEAK TYPE OF INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

The county board of education in South Carolina⁷ usually consists of three members, one of whom is the county superintendent serving in an ex officio capacity. The two other members of the board are appointed by the state board of education, the governor, the county delegation to the legislative assembly, the county superintendent, or by other methods designated by special legislative acts. Seldom is the county board of education directly responsible to the people.

The county board constitutes an advisory body with whom the county superintendent consults when he is in doubt as to the performance of his official duty, and serves also as a kind of tribunal to which local controversial issues are referred. It is responsible for dividing the county into suitable local districts and for the exercise of general control over the content of the curriculum in the public schools.

The county superintendent is elected for a four-year term of office at a popular election. There are no required professional qualifications for the office. He is charged by law with the responsibility for visiting each school in the county at least once a year, noting the methods of instruction and subjects taught, making recommendations for the improvement of instruction, and acquainting himself with the character and condition of school buildings and equipment. When the character and condition of school buildings are unsatisfactory, it is the duty of

⁷ South Carolina State Department of Education, *School Laws of South Carolina*, the Department, Columbia, 1942, pp. 26-37.

the county superintendent to make suggestions to local boards of education for improvement. He apportions the school money raised by the county levy among the schools in the county, keeps a record of all bonds issued by local school districts, and makes a complete statistical report to the state superintendent of public instruction of all schools in the county. The county civil government provides the county board of education with office space, equipment, and supplies.

The functions performed by the intermediate district in South Carolina are limited, for the most part, to general administration and supervision of the schools operated by the local districts. Control, management, and enforcement characterize the work of county board of education and county superintendent. The conception of an intermediate district that provides supplementary services to enrich the educational programs in small districts is not in evidence.

AN ARM OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The method of appointing the county superintendent and the source of funds from which his salary is paid clearly identifies the New Jersey⁸ county superintendent as an arm of the state department of public instruction. The county superintendent in this state is appointed by the chief state school officer, subject to the approval of the state board of education. His salary is paid in semimonthly installments by the state comptroller on authorization of the state commissioner of public instruction.

New Jersey was one of the first states to provide a well-organized, carefully planned, and adequately staffed program of rural school supervision. This program is administered through the county superintendent's office, but the service is initiated at the state level and is supported by state funds. A law enacted by the state legislature in 1916 authorized the state commissioner of education to appoint, with the approval of the state board of education, a helping teacher to aid and direct the teachers in the schools of two or more districts when he deemed it necessary. An amendment to this law a few years later

⁸ New Jersey State Department of Public Instruction, *New Jersey School Laws, the Department*, Trenton, 1938, pp. 12-13.

authorized the state commissioner to fix the salaries and establish maximum travel allowances for helping teachers.

There are at present forty-five general helping teachers and sixteen special helping teachers in the state. They work under the direction of the county superintendents and receive their salaries from apportionments of state school money received by the county superintendent. Office space, equipment, and clerical assistance for the county superintendent's office are provided by the county civil government.

The county superintendent in New Jersey exercises general administrative and supervisory control over all public schools in the county. He makes budgetary provisions for the employment of county attendance officers and county health officers, coöperates with the county board of freeholders in establishing and operating county schools for socially and emotionally disturbed children, and advises with local boards of education on the construction, heating, lighting, and ventilation of school buildings.

The impetus given to the development of the intermediate district of school administration in New Jersey has clearly been from the state level. It has been in the past and continues to be a means of bringing state educational leadership into closer grips with educational problems in the local districts, an agency for the apportionment and supervision of the expenditure of state school funds, and a device for carrying out state educational policy. It can be classified as one of the stronger county intermediate districts in the entire country. Its strength can be attributed in a large part to the high professional qualifications of the people attracted to administrative and supervisory positions in the organization, to the provisions made for financing its program of activities, and to the character of duties and responsibilities assigned to this level of educational administration.

UPWARD EXTENSION OF LOCAL CONTROL

The organization of the county intermediate district in Missouri provides for much more direct participation on the part of local citizens than the New Jersey intermediate district. The county superintendent in this state is elected for a four-year term of office by the qualified voters of the county. This election is held in conjunction with the

annual spring school meetings in each local district, with the local school board members serving as election officials. The salary of the county superintendent, which is set by state law, varies with the total population of the counties, with superintendents in the more populous counties receiving the higher salaries.

Responsibility for financing the intermediate district office is shared jointly by the state and the county. The state contributes \$400 annually toward payment of the county superintendent's salary and assumes approximately one-half the cost of clerical help for his office in all counties with a population of less than 400,000. In addition to his regular salary, the county superintendent is paid from state funds an annual stipend, varying from \$375 in the smaller counties to \$750 in the larger counties, for supervising school transportation. The remainder of the superintendent's salary; his travel expenses, which cannot exceed one-fourth of his annual salary; and approximately one-half the cost of clerical services in his office are paid from county revenues.

The provision for additional payments for administering the county school transportation program was, undoubtedly, a legislative device used to secure a needed increase in the county superintendent's salary, which was frozen by law. While such procedure could be easily justified on the basis of additional responsibilities placed on the office by the rapidly developing transportation program, it cannot be regarded as sound practice. The legal framework and state administrative policy governing the organization and operation of the intermediate district should reflect the county superintendent as an educational leader with all his duties and responsibilities unified toward this common end. Legislation or administrative regulations which separate his work into distinct segments will, in the long run, weaken rather than strengthen his position. In states where there are no county intermediate district boards, the state board of education should have discretionary power for fixing the county superintendent's salary. Legislation should deal only with minimum salaries.

Major emphasis is given to the Missouri county superintendent's responsibility for providing educational leadership in the rural areas of the state. The state law makes it mandatory that he spend several

days each year studying problems of rural education in conferences and workshops organized by the state superintendent of public instruction, or spend at least twenty days each year in the state university or in a state college.

Much of the county superintendent's leadership is exercised through direct personal contact with teachers, school board officials, and lay citizens in organized meetings and in informal conferences. He is required by law to hold at least six public meetings each year at different points in the county to discuss educational questions, interpret school law, and promote the cause of education among the people. He organizes and conducts county conferences and workshops for teachers and once each year organizes and conducts a conference of the presidents and clerks of all local school boards in the county to discuss questions pertaining to school administration.

Many of the duties and responsibilities assigned to the county superintendent's office are broad and of far-reaching significance to the organization and operation of rural schools. He is responsible for the adoption of a course of study, developing plans for grading the schools in the county, establishing standards for the graduation of pupils from the rural elementary schools, and representing the interests of the schools in meetings of the county court.

During the period between 1948 and 1952 the number of local districts in the State of Missouri was reduced by almost 50 percent through reorganization. This major change in local school administration has exerted far-reaching influence on the status of the Missouri county superintendent and the nature of his work. Larger units of administration are now able to provide locally many of the services formerly received from the intermediate district level. In many instances, the area included in a local district includes parts of two or more counties, so that the jurisdiction of county superintendents is not always clearly defined. In some instances, the area included in a local district approximates the area of an entire county, with the result that two levels of school administration are serving about the same area.

These problems have been recognized and given major consideration by a Missouri state school survey commission. Among its many recommendations this commission proposes that the present county superin-

tendency be replaced by a county school service officer appointed by a county board of education. The functions of the county school service officer, according to this proposal, would be to provide the small districts not yet affected by reorganization about the same kind of services the county superintendent now provides. This commission has apparently reached the conclusion that the intermediate level of school administration in a state becomes superfluous as soon as local school district reorganization reaches the level of a neighborhood or community unit. The determining factor, pointed out in the report, is whether or not a school district is large enough to employ an administrative or supervisory head who is required to devote no more than half time to classroom teaching.⁹

SUPERVISORY UNIONS

The intermediate district throughout the New England states, where the town is usually the local district, is comprised of a number of towns. It is known as the supervisory union. The superintendent of this intermediate unit is commonly referred to as a "union district superintendent." Outside of cities and towns large enough to employ their own superintendents, most of the communities in the New England area are under the administration of a union superintendent. In 1950 there was a total of 550 superintendents in the New England states. About half of them were union superintendents.

The earliest legislation relative to the establishment of supervisory unions in all the New England states was permissive. Legislation authorizing two or more local town districts to unite for the purpose of employing a professional superintendent was enacted in Massachusetts, 1888; in New Hampshire, 1895; in Maine, 1897; in Connecticut, 1903; in Rhode Island, 1903; and in Vermont, 1906.

Under this permissive legislation, membership in a union was voluntary and frequently of short duration. Any member could withdraw by a majority vote at the annual school meeting. Furthermore, only the communities alert enough to see the advantages of professional administrative leadership to give direction to their educational program

⁹ *Missouri Plans for Better Schools*, a Digest of the Report of the Missouri Citizens Commission for the Study of Education, published as supplement to the One Hundred Third Annual Report, Missouri Public Schools, Jefferson City, September, 1952, pp. 29-33.

took advantage of this opportunity to employ a district superintendent.

The transitory character of local district membership in supervisory unions created unstable organizations and prevented the formation of long-range educational plans. Consequently, the laws were revised making it mandatory, in most of these states, for districts that did not employ superintendents to become members of supervisory unions.

Brief descriptions of the supervisory unions in New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Maine illustrate variations in the organization and functions of the intermediate district in New England. In one instance it is in the nature of pooling local resources; in another, a decentralization of state department of education leadership; in another it is the exercise of initiative and control of the people within a framework established by the state; and in another instance the intermediate district is relatively unimportant because the state is largely urban.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

The first three supervisory unions in New Hampshire were formed in 1900 under the provision of the permissive legislation which had been enacted five years earlier. Experiences in these unions, as well as in unions which had been established in other New England states, pointed clearly to the advantages of professional administrative leadership in rural areas and demonstrated the practicability of pooling the resources of two or more small local districts for the employment of a superintendent. But even with the advantages apparent, many rural districts, frequently districts that had the greatest need for professional educational leadership, did not become members of unions. As a result, legislation was enacted in 1919 making it mandatory that the state board of education divide the entire state into supervisory unions comprised of two or more local districts. Furthermore, this law gave the state board of education discretionary power to dissolve supervisory unions and to form new unions when such action would promote efficient and effective operation of the schools.

In 1920 the state was divided into sixty supervisory unions¹⁰ which

¹⁰ Edgar Fuller, *Public Education in New Hampshire*, the Seventy-Third Report of the State Board of Education Concerning Public Education in New Hampshire, State Department of Education, Concord, 1948, pp. 97-98.

employed sixty superintendents and three assistant superintendents. Thus, the supervisory union in New Hampshire became the statewide educational unit for the supervision of rural schools. There were at that time nearly 900 one-teacher schools in the state to be supervised by these rural superintendents.

Since 1920 the number of supervisory unions has been gradually reduced through reorganization by the state board of education from sixty to forty-eight. The number of towns included in each supervisory union in 1948 ranged as high as nine, with the average being about six. The total pupil enrollment in all the districts in each union ranges from about 600 in the smallest to more than 6000 in the most populous union.

The supervisory union board is made up of members of boards of education of the several districts constituting the union. Districts that operate one or more schools are entitled to three voting members on the union board. Districts that do not operate schools, but that still maintain their identity as corporate bodies, have but one voting member on the board.

The superintendent of schools of each union is nominated by the joint board of the union but is employed by the state board of education. In many respects, the union superintendent acts as the chief executive officer of each local district board in the union. He nominates all teachers for employment; selects and purchases textbooks and other instructional supplies; supervises instruction and the work of janitors; establishes regulations for the admission, classification, and graduation of pupils; and administers district budgets.

The minimum salary of the superintendent, which is fixed by law, is paid by the state. Actual salaries, which are set by the supervisory union boards, exceed the minimum salary. The excess over and above the state minimum salary is apportioned among the several districts comprising the union.

CONNECTICUT

Administrative and supervisory services provided at the intermediate district level in Connecticut are administered from the Bureau of Rural Supervisory Services in the state department of education. Pro-

vision of these services represents a kind of decentralization of the state department of education that brings its employees into direct contact with the organization and operation of schools in local communities. These services are provided in lieu of locally employed superintendents in districts that are not large enough to employ their own superintendents.

Any district in the state which employs twenty-five or fewer teachers can secure these services by request. The state board of education assigns the superintendent and an elementary supervisor to each of the district offices.

The superintendent is a consultant to local district boards of education as well as their administrative officer. He nominates teachers for employment and advises boards on hiring other personnel. He assists them with the purchase of textbooks, supplies, and equipment, aids them in the preparation and administration of their budgets, and counsels with them on the formulation of educational policy. The elementary supervisor is responsible for the improvement of instruction. She works closely with teachers, principals, parents, and with the superintendent for the improvement of instruction. Much of the time and energy of both the superintendent and the supervisor are devoted to general educational leadership, involving conferences with building committees, consultation with architects, and numerous meetings with lay and professional groups of people who are concerned with improvement of community education.

In 1950 there were but twelve union superintendents in the entire State of Connecticut, each of whom served as the school administrator in from five to nine local districts. The number of teachers in each union varied from thirty-two to ninety. These loosely organized intermediate districts, which derive most of their strength from the state department of education, have been a means of bringing educational leadership to small local school districts. Over the half century this form of organization has been in effect these educational leaders have, undoubtedly, made an almost invaluable contribution to the improvement of rural education in the state. But a loosely constructed federation without legal backing cannot provide many of the essential services required in a comprehensive educational program. An organiza-

tion which would combine a number of local districts into a legally constituted entity would, undoubtedly, be a great improvement over the present coöperative arrangement.

RHODE ISLAND

Owing to the concentration of population in urban centers and a relatively small rural area, the union superintendency has been relatively unimportant in the total pattern of school administration in Rhode Island. Legislation enacted in this state in 1903 made state funds available to the smaller local districts to assist them in employing superintendents on a coöperative basis. But at no time has the number of union superintendents employed exceeded seven. In 1950 only three of the thirty-six superintendents in the state were union superintendents.

MAINE

As in other New England states, the town constitutes the local unit for school administration in the rural areas of Maine. The three-member local board of education, known as the school superintending committee, is selected by ballot at the annual town meeting. This committee is empowered to employ a school superintendent, but in most instances the school population in the town is not large enough to justify the employment of a well-qualified superintendent on a full-time basis. To overcome this difficulty the statutes provide that the state commissioner of education, together with a committee of three appointed by the governor, shall group the towns into suitable units, known as unions, for the purpose of employing a superintendent. Except in unusual situations, the unions have not fewer than thirty-five nor more than seventy-five teachers. Towns and cities having more than seventy-five teachers need not unite with other school districts for employing a superintendent.

The superintending committees of the several towns included in a union jointly constitute a committee for governing the union. This joint committee elects a superintendent, determines the amount of time he shall devote to each of the constituent districts and prorates his

salary on the basis of services provided in each district. The state contributes an amount equal to the aggregate sum paid by the constituent districts toward payment of the superintendent's salary.

The position of the union school superintendent calls for a broad catalog of skills. He must function not only as an executive officer and secretary for the several different school committees in the union but he also serves in the capacity of supervisor of instruction, finance officer, personnel director, purchasing and distributing agent, chief of maintenance, school transportation supervisor, cafeteria supervisor, legal adviser, public relations officer, and as a counselor with parents, teachers, and pupils on matters pertaining to safety, health, and juvenile delinquency. Many of the activities of the office could, perhaps, be labeled just plain trouble-shooting, but the overall effect of his efforts has been a quality of educational leadership that has contributed much toward the improvement of the educational program in the open country and sparsely settled areas of this rural state.

The position has come a long way since the day when a layman—almost any layman—could be called upon to give a quick look at the schools for an annual stipend of about \$50. Salaries are still low for the quality of people that hold these positions. They range from \$2000 to \$7000. School committees carefully weigh the qualities and character required for good educational leadership as they face the important responsibility of selecting a new superintendent. Master's degrees have become commonplace as one of the professional qualifications for the position, and many incumbent superintendents are approaching the completion of doctoral degrees.¹¹

THE TOWNSHIP INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT

During the evolutionary process of the development of the intermediate district, the town or township has frequently become the unit for organization. But as illustrated in New York State, such units have not continued in operation for long. Experience has proved that they have been too small to attract capable professional educational leadership, have lacked the necessary resources to perform the functions

¹¹ Lorey C. Day, "The Superintendent Looks at His Own Job," *Maine Schools*, State Department of Education, Augusta, April, 1949, pp. 15-17.

commonly assigned to the intermediate district level, have been unable to exert the needed integrating influence among small local school districts, and have been too numerous to maintain a free and accurate flow of information between the state department of education and the local administrative units. Consequently, they have been replaced by larger units, in most instances by the county.

There are some states, however, in which the township continues to exercise some intermediate district functions. For example, in Michigan the township board has authority to divide the township into local school districts. It may alter the boundaries of local districts and upon authorization by a majority of the voters may organize a township into a single local administrative unit.

Comparable authority is vested in Wisconsin town boards. In addition to their discretionary power for the reorganization of local districts, Wisconsin town boards have authority to grant short-term loans to local school districts within the limits of their jurisdiction.

In Illinois each township is governed by a board of three trustees who appoint a treasurer for each school district in the township. The township collects and distributes the school funds of the districts under its control, holds title to school property within its boundaries, and may consolidate school districts when authorized by vote or petition. In situations in which school districts do not coincide with boundaries of the township, jurisdiction follows the location of the school building.¹²

SERVICE FUNCTION OF THE INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT

The earliest functions of the intermediate district can be roughly classified as administrative, supervisory, and clerical. Exercise of general oversight over the educational programs operating in its area was its chief concern. Little or no attempt was made to provide instructional services of any kind. This function was held to be the sole responsibility of the local districts.

But conditions have changed. In recent years there has been a marked tendency for rural people to place a wider range of responsi-

¹² Howard A. Dawson and others, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56.

bility for educational services at the intermediate district level. More and more it is being regarded as a unit of school government which can provide essential specialized instructional and auxiliary services as well as exercise general administrative and supervisory oversight.

As the concept of a satisfactory educational program has changed from the three R's to a program that is characterized by such terms as "child growth and development" and "life adjustment," and as the program has been extended to include people at both lower and higher age levels than formerly were enrolled in the public schools, demand has been created for a wider range of educational services, many of which can be provided only by highly trained professional personnel. Many types of instructional aids and equipment that have come to be accepted as essentials in good educational programs are expensive. Many of these essential services and much of the equipment needed cannot be provided on an economically sound basis by small local districts. As a consequence, there is a growing tendency to assign responsibility for providing such services to intermediate districts. It is a way of sharing the services of highly skilled personnel and distributing the cost and use of equipment among small districts in sparsely settled rural areas.

California provides a notable example of the service function of the intermediate district. In this state a county school service fund amounting to approximately \$3 per pupil in average daily attendance in each county is provided for in the state school financial plan. These funds, which are distributed by the state directly to the county superintendent's office, constitute an important part of the intermediate district budget. The state contribution to the county school service fund is supplemented in many California counties by funds provided through contractual arrangements between the county superintendent's office and local districts in which the local districts purchase services from the intermediate district. With these budgetary provisions the county intermediate district has strengthened greatly such features of the educational program in local districts as visual aids, libraries, health education services, supervision of instruction, care of handicapped children, and specialized types of vocational education.

UNDERLYING PHILOSOPHY OF THE SPECIAL SERVICE FUNCTION

The philosophy underlying the purposes and operation of the special service function of the intermediate district in California was concretely stated by County Superintendent Trillingham of Los Angeles County in a hearing of the Assembly Interim Committee on Public Education:

The function of the county office under this professional program has been the champion of the little fellow of the smaller districts . . . to see to it that they (the people in these districts) can get an educational service comparable to what a good city program is able to do. We think it is an economy to do it through a central office because it certainly can be more expensive if every one of these districts try to do all of that for themselves. We try to lean over backwards to work under the philosophy that the center of gravity of education is within the local district. It is not in the county office. We do not try to run the districts—we try to serve the districts. We try to emphasize over and over again to our people that the local administrator, working under the local board and selected by the local people, has the final answers. We are a service to them. We are resource people. We bring some special resources that they need and do not have on their staff.¹³

A partial roster of the services provided through the county superintendent's office to the local districts in the county illustrates the service function of the intermediate district. This list of services includes:

1. A visual aids library consisting of 3,500 films and a proportionate number of filmstrips, slides, recordings, and study prints. These instructional aids are purchased by an annual contribution from the local districts of thirty-five cents per child in average daily attendance. The county superintendent's office provides the supervisory assistance and transportation necessary for making these teaching aids readily available for constructive use in the classrooms of every district.
2. Five special schools maintained in sanitariums and hospitals to meet the special needs of physically handicapped children.
3. A special school maintained under the cooperative effort of the county superintendent's office and the county probation department for boys

¹³ C. C. Trillingham, "The County Superintendent and the County Service Fund," *Second Report of the Assembly Interim Committee on Public Education*, Assembly of the State of California, Sacramento, 1949, p. 113.

of junior high school age who for some reason are not able to make proper adjustments to the regular educational program.

4. A special director of trade and industrial education to assist with the development and operation of trade and industrial education programs in the local districts.
5. A number of psychologists who assist the local districts in setting up their guidance and counseling programs and give individual help with cases of serious maladjustment.
6. A cooperative school library that serves 113 different elementary schools with bookmobiles making regularly scheduled deliveries.
7. A co-ordinator of speech education who gives speech diagnostic services to children in local districts.
8. An audiometer-telebinoculist who tests the hearing and vision of children, organizes otological clinics and gives guidance and counsel to local districts in developing testing and remedial programs.
9. School nurse service.
10. A training program for school custodians.
11. A four-week summer workshop for teachers developed through the cooperation of the county school office, the state department of education, and the colleges and universities located in the county.
12. An extensive program of instructional supervisory services.¹⁴

The range of services provided through the county superintendent's office in this large and populous county is much greater than in the typical intermediate district. This illustration points to the direction of likely future developments rather than reflects the general character of present conditions throughout the country. But less comprehensive programs in many states clearly indicate a growing tendency for the intermediate district to provide specialized services to supplement the educational programs in the local districts.

Rural people, particularly younger parents, are no longer content with the educational program that can be provided by the small school districts predominant in sparsely settled rural areas and in many instances in populous areas adjacent to larger centers of population. They want to provide for their children through the public schools the advantages of safe and comfortable transportation, adequate health

¹⁴ C. C. Trillingham, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, County of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, 1947* (mimeographed), pp. 4-85.

education services, personal and vocational guidance, special advantages needed by physically and mentally handicapped children, and a wider range of vocational preparation. These are not new innovations. In the better school systems of the country they have long been regarded as commonplace; but in sparsely settled rural areas, where the number of children in any one district tends to be relatively small, these and many other comparable advantages are difficult and expensive to provide. Confronted with this difficulty, rural people have turned to the intermediate district as a means for pooling their resources and sharing such services.

THE FUTURE OF THE INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT

The intermediate district is yet in the developmental stage. Neither its functions nor its organizational structure are as clearly established as in state departments of education, city school systems, or local community and neighborhood districts. It is the unit of administration which lends itself most readily to the adaptations necessitated by educational change. Rather than being weakened by change in organization and function, the intermediate district has tended to become stronger. Qualifications for the superintendent's office have been raised, professional and clerical assistance has been increased, intermediate district boards have been established in a number of states, and the functions of the office have been broadened. Research and recent legislation indicate that the intermediate district in most parts of the country is likely to be strengthened during the years immediately ahead.

Permissive legislation enacted in 1948 in New York State, following a comprehensive study of educational needs and resources in rural areas, provides for the organization of the state into 65 intermediate districts which would replace the present 158 supervisory districts.¹⁵ Each of the proposed new intermediate districts will have a five-member board of education with power to appoint a superintendent as its chief executive officer, and to employ, upon recommendation of

¹⁵ Julian E. Butterworth and others, *A New Intermediate School District for New York State*, University of the State of New York, State Education Department, Albany, Bulletin No. 1336, pp. 9-60.

the superintendent, the additional personnel needed to carry on the program of the intermediate district. This intermediate district will have full responsibility for pupil transportation in the constituent local districts, for supervision of attendance, and for providing the special educational advantages needed for mentally and physically handicapped children. It is responsible for assisting principals and teachers in the local districts with the improvement of instruction, providing instruction in industrial and trade education, and for such other educational services as may be assigned to it by an intermediate council made up of the trustees and members of boards of education in the local districts comprising the area of the intermediate district.

The program of the intermediate district will be financed in part by grants of state aid to the intermediate district and in part by a tax levied by the intermediate district board.

Recent legislation in Michigan has established a five-member county board of education in each county of the state which is elected by representatives of local district boards. The county board appoints the county superintendent.

The 1946 survey of public education in Idaho, which gave major consideration to the reorganization of local school districts, also recognized the need for strengthening and improving the intermediate district. This could be accomplished, according to the recommendations of this survey committee, by providing for the election of a five-member county board of education by the trustees of the local school districts, making the county superintendency an appointive rather than an elective office, placing the responsibility for determining the professional qualifications and fixing the salary of county superintendents with the state board of education, and providing a budget for the county superintendent's office out of county and state school funds.¹⁶

Varying conditions in different parts of the country will influence the steps which seem likely to be taken to strengthen intermediate district organization as it gradually assumes new responsibilities for

¹⁶ John E. Brewton and others, *Public Education in Idaho*, a Report of the Idaho Education Survey Commission, Division of Surveys and Field Services, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, 1946, p. 488.

education in rural areas of America, but in general these steps will involve:

1. Establishing intermediate district boards of education that exercise administrative control over the broad aspects of the educational program and have responsibility for providing essential educational services to supplement the programs in the local districts.
2. Giving the intermediate district levying powers within reasonable limits that will permit the formation of a budget for carrying on a district-wide educational program through the superintendent's office.
3. Making the intermediate district superintendent an appointive officer. The trend of recent legislation indicates that he will be appointed by an elective board.
4. Raising the professional qualifications of the intermediate district superintendent, increasing the number of professional persons on his staff, and making his salary comparable to the salaries of superintendents in smaller and medium size city districts.
5. Allocating state aid to the intermediate district to assist in maintaining an adequate educational program.
6. Making the intermediate district responsible for the provision of essential educational services that cannot be provided on an efficient and economically sound basis by local administrative units.¹⁷

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¹⁷ Shirley Cooper and others, *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, Yearbook of the NEA Department of Rural Education, the Department, Washington, D.C., 1950, Chapter VI.

Cooper, Shirley (ed.), *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, Yearbook of the Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1950.

A descriptive statement of the status of the county superintendent in the United States with emphasis on leadership responsibilities. Chapter VI is devoted to an analysis of trends in intermediate district organization.

Judd, Charles H., and others, *Administration and Supervision*, Rural School Survey of New York State, Cornell University, Ithaca, 1923.

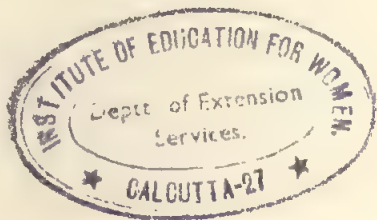
Part II of this report deals in a comprehensive manner with the historical development of the intermediate district, selection and qualifications of professional officers, and exercise of supervisory functions. Chapter XXII points out principles governing the division of responsibilities among local, intermediate, and state administrative units. This is an old book, yet it is still one of the best in the field.

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CHAPTER V

The County Superintendent of Schools

County school administration is not a free-wheeling process. If it is to be effective and function in terms of its purposes, a number of favorable conditions must be established and certain techniques and processes put into operation. Of all the factors involved, numerous and interrelated though they may be, none is more vital than the professional leadership competencies which the county superintendent brings to bear on the tasks confronting him.

The setting for exercise of this leadership has been treated in some detail in earlier chapters dealing with socioeconomic conditions in the county and with the educational needs of children and youth that arise from or are influenced by these conditions. It is worth recalling that this setting, even though a rural one in most counties, is dynamic in nature; that it has brought and is continuing to bring profoundly significant changes in the ways of living of county people; and that these changes are giving rise to problems and issues in living which can be solved only by providing educational programs which will prepare young people to come to grips with them. That this setting demands a high quality educational leadership is highlighted in subsequent chapters which describe the administrative structures in which county superintendents function, the democratic relationships involved, and the services rendered. Chapter VII deals entirely with the nature of the leadership which is necessary and with the processes in whole-some human relationships it involves.

This chapter is primarily concerned with the professional status of the men and women who provide that leadership. At the onset it is important to note that the development of the county superintendency to its present status has been an evolutionary process; that over the years the position has profoundly changed in many areas of the country; that the rate of this change has increased very markedly during the past decade; and that highly significant efforts are presently under way to bring still further improvements. At the same time it should also be observed that the status of the position has not everywhere kept apace of the growing demands which educational needs in the county place upon it and that in such instances the professional aspects of the county superintendency do not fully measure up to those of the city superintendency. This lag in development has caused some critics to take a dim-sighted view concerning the potentialities and future of the position. Actually, it poses a problem in educational planning and statesmanship, the solution to which is clearly indicated in state after state where the professional status of the county superintendency has been made fully comparable and on a par with that of other school administrators.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

A better understanding of the county superintendent's status today may be gained if it is viewed from the vantage point of historical perspective. School administration—county, state, and local district—has gradually evolved as a profession. It did not burst forth in full blossom the moment that a favorable climate came into existence. As with other professions, it has unfolded and taken shape as gains have been made in social progress and the unique function of education in our way of life has come to be more fully implemented.

AN OLD POSITION

The county superintendency had its beginnings during the same period that the state and city superintendencies emerged. New York State appointed a state superintendent in 1812, nine years later abolishing the position and making the secretary of state *ex officio* superintendent until 1854, when the office of state superintendent of public

instruction was created. Maryland had a state superintendent from 1826 to 1828; then abolished the office until 1868, when it was re-established. Michigan established the office of state superintendent of common schools in 1829, changing the title to "state superintendent of public instruction," which it has continuously remained to the present time.¹

The first city superintendencies were established in Buffalo and Louisville in 1837. St. Louis and Providence followed suit in 1839; Philadelphia and Springfield, Massachusetts, took the same step in 1840. By 1850 twelve cities had established the office of superintendent of schools, but four of them—Springfield, Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Baltimore—abolished the position and did not reestablish it until a number of years later.²

As indicated above, these developments at the state level and in some of the cities were accompanied by the emergence of the county superintendency. The first state to enact legislation providing for the establishment of the position was Delaware, in 1829. New York State followed suit in 1843 and a number of others established the office soon afterward—Illinois in 1844, Virginia in 1845, Louisiana and Ohio in 1847, North Carolina in 1848, New Hampshire and Oregon in 1850, and California in 1852. So widespread did the movement become that by 1879 thirty-four of the thirty-eight states then comprising the Union and four of the territories had created the office.³

EXPERIMENTATION

The general acceptance which the county superintendency gained in the half century between 1829 and 1879 was also accompanied by a number of setbacks, most of them temporary. As happened in several instances with the state superintendency and the superintendency in some cities, a number of states had difficulties in keeping the county superintendency established on a permanent basis during the early

¹ Ellwood P. Cubberley, *Public School Administration*, Third Edition, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1929, p. 33.

² American Association of School Administrators, *The American School Superintendency*, Thirtieth Yearbook, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1952, p. 55.

³ N. William Newsom, *The Legal Status of the County Superintendent*, Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., Bulletin, 1932, No. 7, pp. 1-4.

stages of its development. It seems apparent that these states were feeling their way during this early period and were actively searching for the most effective plan whereby the interests of the state in educational matters could be carried close to the people. Chapter IV traces this development in New York State. Others had somewhat similar experiences.

Some states, having created the county superintendency and having tried it out for varying lengths of time, abolished it and, after experimenting for a time with other plans, reestablished it. Arizona, California, Delaware, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Ohio, Texas, and Virginia all followed this pattern of experimentation before finally establishing the position permanently. However, Delaware, with but three counties, abolished the office a second time and did not again reestablish it.⁴

Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont also created the office, but after trying it for brief periods abandoned it permanently. In comparison with the towns, the county has never been strong enough for the office to flourish in the New England region. Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island are the only states that have not at some time in their history had county superintendents.

EVOLUTIONARY STEPS

As mentioned earlier the county superintendency did not suddenly emerge as a full-fashioned position in educational administration. In a number of instances it gradually evolved out of some other county office.

In Indiana a county school commissioner was created to look after the school lands; later this responsibility was transferred to the county auditor, who was made *ex officio* a county school official; later still, a county examiner of teachers was established and the school functions of the county auditor were transferred to him; finally, almost four decades after the first step was taken, the county superintendency was created.

North Carolina began by first providing that each county have a group of five to ten people who functioned much like a board of edu-

⁴ *Ibid.*

cation, with the chairman appointed by the group performing duties somewhat resembling those of a county superintendent; later this system was abolished in favor of a committee of county school examiners who were responsible for appointing someone to visit the schools; still later, this plan was modified so that each county had but one school examiner; in turn, this plan was abandoned and the county superintendency established.

Missouri first provided that the county clerk perform certain duties in operating the schools and did not create the county superintendency until a quarter century after initiating this first step in its development. In Ohio the position evolved from the office of county examiner through successive stages of legislation enacted over a sixteen-year period.

Elsewhere, the position evolved from a variety of county or township offices. Thus, in California it was preceded by township supervising committees and the county assessor serving as county superintendent ex officio; in Georgia, by the county ordinary or judge; in Illinois, by the county land commissioner; and in Mississippi, by the county board of school commissioners. In New York the office was created to replace the town school inspectors and in Pennsylvania it supplanted district inspectors. In Michigan the township superintendency was in existence for thirty years before the county superintendent's office was established to replace it.⁵

These evolutionary developments came during a period when the profession of school administration was in its infancy. State school systems were going through comparable developmental stages. Likewise, city school systems were just beginning to take definite form in some of the larger urban centers. In counties, as in cities and states, the people were seeking to find a means for providing educational leadership to administer the schools. Having no set patterns to copy or well-established guides to follow in establishing such leadership positions at the county level, everywhere the people had to take whatever steps seemed practical.

Thus, it was natural for the county superintendency to evolve as it

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6.

did and in such a variety of ways. The significant point is that, out of this diversity of effort in the states to find a workable solution to the need for local educational leadership in a predominantly agrarian economy, the county superintendency in a relatively short time became so widespread and commonly accepted.

PRESENT ORGANIZATION

Probably no other administrative position in American public school systems has such widely varying and fundamentally different patterns of organization as does the county superintendency. The most commonly used and certainly the most clear-cut and distinctive classification divides county superintendents into two general groups: those in the twenty-seven states where the county is an intermediate school district and those in the twelve states where the county functions as the basic unit of school administration. The first type, together with the union superintendency in New England and the district superintendency in New York State, have been dealt with in Chapter IV. A detailed treatment of the county superintendency in the county-unit states will be found in Chapter VI.

NUMBER OF POSITIONS

Only two states, Delaware and Nevada, do not have superintendents of county-unit school districts, or superintendents of county, or some other type of intermediate administrative unit. All the other forty-six states have one type or the other and, as indicated elsewhere, some of the county intermediate states have a few county-unit superintendencies. While the union superintendencies in New England and the district superintendencies in New York State have areas of jurisdiction which typically are almost totally unrelated to county boundary lines, they function similarly to the county superintendency in the county intermediate states and for that reason are included in the remaining portion of this discussion, although in a separate classification.

Thus, there are approximately 3350 school administrators in this country who are superintendents of county unit, county intermediate,

or comparable intermediate units of school administration. They are distributed among the different types of units as follows:

County-unit districts	913
County intermediate districts	2009
Supervisory districts (New York)	158
Superintendency unions (New England)	277

OFFICIAL TITLES

Not all superintendents administering county school systems are officially designated as county superintendents. In Virginia, where the basic unit of school administration is designated a "division," which in most instances is a single county but also includes city districts and districts composed of two counties, the administrator is officially titled a division superintendent regardless of whether he administers a county, city, or two-county district. The administrators for parish school districts in Louisiana, corresponding to county units in other states, are officially titled parish superintendents. In Arkansas the official designation is county supervisor, even though the duties and responsibilities of the position are administrative in nature and are similar to those of the county superintendency in other county intermediate districts.

However, in the great majority of states the official title is county superintendent of schools, although in some the designation is county superintendent of public instruction or county superintendent of education.

LEGAL BASIS FOR POSITION

The legal basis providing for the county superintendent's position is an important consideration. As pointed out in a recent report by the National Education Association,⁶ the legal status of a superintendent's position is considerably weakened unless there is specific legal authority for its existence. In this respect there is marked contrast between city and county superintendencies in a number of states. In seven states there are no provisions specifically authorizing city school

⁶ National Education Association, Research Division, "Legal Status of the School Superintendent," *Research Bulletin*, the Association, Washington, D.C., October, 1951.

boards to employ superintendents; in a number of others this authority is specified only for districts of certain sizes and types. In such situations the employment of the superintendent comes under the implied powers of the school board or is inferred from its general authority to employ teachers and other personnel for the schools.

By way of contrast, in no state having county superintendents is the establishment of his position left to inference. In twenty-five states the position has been established by the state legislature. There are fourteen states (Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Dakota, South Carolina, South Dakota, Virginia, and West Virginia) where the county superintendency is specifically provided for in the state constitution. As constitutional officers, the county superintendents in this latter group of states have as stable and permanent public positions as can be provided for under our system of government.

In fact, there may be serious question as to the wisdom of making provisions in a state constitution for public school superintendents. This is particularly true when constitutional provisions, as is the case with respect to county superintendents in some of the states listed above, specify the method of appointment or term of office, make references to salary or its source, or assign certain duties to be performed. All these matters, including the establishment of the county superintendency itself, are more properly the concern of the state legislature.

In all states the legislature is vested with broad powers to provide for a system of public schools, including the power to create and alter school districts and to clothe them with corporate powers necessary for performing their assigned functions, to provide standards and qualifications of professional personnel, and to make other provisions necessary for the operation of school systems. In view of these powers of the legislature—powers which have been exercised in response to the desires of the people and which have been key factors in the development of American public school systems—it would be difficult to justify the singling out of one particular administrative position and making it a constitutional office when others, equally important, are left to legislative determination.

Such provisions involve practical considerations. Legislative enactments are easier to change when the need arises than are constitutional provisions. This is not to say that the county superintendency should be subject to unnecessary change, but it is important that an effective and easily applied method of making changes should be available. In fact, there are situations in a number of states which may pose future problems in this respect.

This is particularly evident where school district reorganization programs have resulted in the establishment of county-unit districts. For example, in Illinois, where highly significant progress has recently been made in establishing larger and more effective local school administrative units, five of the new community unit districts, as they are termed in that state, have been established, each including an entire county. Thus, the new community unit and the county intermediate district in these five situations are identical in area. The newly created community district is served by a superintendent appointed by the community-unit board of education. But there is also in this county a county superintendent who is a constitutional officer, elected by the people. Thus, there are two superintendents serving at the same time in these counties.

Colorado has some similar situations, one of them being Jefferson County, which is located near Denver. In 1950 the people in Jefferson County voted to reorganize all their school districts into one unit embracing the entire county. The new district, having approximately 12,000 pupils, is administered by a superintendent who has on his administrative staff three assistant superintendents as well as other administrative and supervisory personnel, all appointed by the new board of education. But the county superintendent, a constitutional official elected by direct vote of the people, has the same area of jurisdiction that the new district covers and since the reorganization has been working as an unofficial assistant to the assistant superintendent in charge of elementary schools.

Obviously, such examples are extremes. But they serve to point up difficulties that may be encountered when states reorganize their small rural school districts into large units, as many states are now doing, and then discover that changes will be necessary in the intermediate district structure if it is to render educational services that the reor-

ganized basic units find it uneconomical or impracticable to provide.

In such cases the first step in making needed changes in the intermediate district, perhaps grouping two or more small counties or parts of them into larger units, would involve changing the state constitutional provisions relating to the county superintendency and giving the state legislature the power to provide for the establishment of such intermediate districts with those functions assigned to them which the needs of the basic districts would indicate necessary.

This step has been taken by Idaho, a state which during the past five years has made highly significant progress in school district reorganization. In 1947 the people voted to eliminate the provision in their state constitution providing for county superintendents. As a result the legislature has already greatly strengthened the county superintendency, providing for the creation of county boards of education with powers to levy taxes to finance needed intermediate district services and to appoint the county superintendent as their administrative officer. The problem of making adjustments in the intermediate district structure in instances where the boundaries of present county intermediate units and reorganized county units are coterminous has not been dealt with as yet. But at least the problem has been brought out in the open where the legislature, the people, and the educational forces of the state can work on it.

SELECTING THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT

Few, if any, decisions have such far-reaching importance to a school system as the selection of its superintendent. Numerous school systems make highly significant progress despite many heavy handicaps, even rising above serious limitations. But no school system, whatever the excellence of its other qualities, can accomplish its purposes without capable leadership. The full significance of this essential quality, described in detail in subsequent chapters, underlines the necessity of using effective means of securing it. In every school system, whether city, village, state, or county, the effectiveness of the method used to secure a capable superintendent is of prime importance.

Unlike city and village superintendents, who everywhere are selected by the local board of education, county superintendents are chosen for office by a variety of methods. Widely varying differences

exist not only among states but within some of them, both in states having the county-unit type of organization and those having intermediate districts.

ELECTION BY POPULAR VOTE

Historically, the selection of county superintendents by vote of the people has been more widely used than any other method. It still is. Today a total of twenty-four states use this method, eighteen of them exclusively. In these twenty-four states the number of county superintendents elected by popular vote is more than half the total for the entire country.

Of the twenty-seven county intermediate district states, in fourteen (Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming) all county superintendents are elected by popular vote. In addition, all are popularly elected in California except in a few counties where the position has been made appointive under state civil service regulations, everywhere in Texas except counties above 350,000 population, in all South Carolina counties except four, and in most Oregon counties. Over 1400, a little more than 70 percent, of the 2009 county superintendents in the twenty-seven county intermediate district states are elected by popular vote.

About two-fifths, 39 percent, of the 913 county superintendents in the twelve county-unit states are popularly elected. All those in Florida and New Mexico are and all in Georgia except for five counties where the position has been made appointive by special acts of the state legislature. Forty-seven of the sixty-seven county superintendents in Alabama and fifty-three of the ninety-five in Tennessee are elected by the people.

Among the states using the popular vote method there are a number of instances where plans have been adopted to help keep the selection of county superintendents from becoming involved in partisan politics. California, Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, and South Dakota provide for election on a nonpartisan ballot. In Wisconsin a special election is held in the spring of the year with the candidates listed on a nonpartisan ballot.

The geographic distribution of the states where election is by popu-

lar vote merits observation. None is located east of Illinois, north of the Mason-Dixon Line. On the other hand, of the twenty-four states entirely west of Indiana and Alabama, all but five (Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, Louisiana, and Utah) elect their county superintendents by popular vote.

SELECTION BY APPOINTMENT

In New England and New York all intermediate district superintendents are appointed to their positions. All county superintendents are appointed in eight (Arkansas, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, and Pennsylvania) of the county intermediate district states and in seven (Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, North Carolina, Utah, Virginia, and West Virginia) of the twelve county-unit states.

Among these twenty-two states where the appointive method is employed exclusively and in the five others where it is used at least to some extent, there are widely varying differences in the ways appointments are made. This is especially true for intermediate district states, not only where the county is the intermediate unit but in New England as well. In Connecticut appointment is made by the state department of education. Union superintendents in New Hampshire are appointed by the state board of education from nominations submitted by the school committees (boards of education) for the towns comprising the unions. In Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont appointments are made directly by joint action of the school committees representing the towns in the union. In New York appointments are made by supervisory district boards which have no other function.

Of the eight county intermediate district states using the appointive method exclusively, five (Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, Michigan, and Ohio) provide for appointment by the county board of education. In Ohio county boards have no other function. In Pennsylvania appointment is made by a convention of the directors of school districts which are under the jurisdiction of the county superintendent and in Indiana by a convention of the trustees of township school districts in the county. New Jersey county superintendents are appointed by the state commissioner of education subject to approval by the state board of education.

In the seven county-unit states using the appointive method ex-

clusively, all county superintendents are appointed by the county board of education. In the case of Virginia school divisions composed of more than one county, appointment of the division superintendent is made by joint action of the county boards of education for the counties comprising the division. In both Maryland and Virginia, boards appoint the county superintendent from a list of eligible candidates furnished by the state superintendent of schools. Where Alabama county superintendents are not popularly elected, appointment is made by the county board of education, but those not popularly elected in Tennessee are appointed by the county court (comparable to the county commissioners or board of supervisors in other states).

UNDERLYING ISSUES

Differences in the methods used to select county superintendents pose a number of questions. What is the best method? What are the disadvantages and the advantages, if any, of popular election? What are the underlying principles justifying the appointive method? Why?

Considering the present development of public school administration as a profession and the rapid progress it has made during the past three decades, these might seem to be purely academic questions were it not for the fact that county superintendents are selected in so many different ways. The long-established and practically universal practice of city and village boards of education appointing their superintendents has become so generally accepted and has proven itself so conclusively that few, whether villager, urban dweller, or professional educator, ever pause to question its soundness for village or city school systems. Likewise, practically all professional literature within the past decade has proceeded on the assumption that appointment by the local board of education is the only defensible method and, without spelling out the reasons why it is, deals with procedures for making that method work most effectively. There is good reason for this emphasis, because the appointive method is by no means a self-directing and free-wheeling process automatically guaranteeing complete success every time it is used.

Two decades ago Cubberley⁷ concluded that the basic cause of the

⁷ Ellwood P. Cubberley, *op. cit.*, pp. 664-669.

weaknesses which he found in the county superintendency was its widespread involvement in partisan politics occasioned by the popular-vote method of selection. During the same period Tink⁸ concluded, as a result of his study of methods of selecting county superintendents, that the appointive method in Alabama, Maryland, and North Carolina, as contrasted with the elective method in Florida, resulted in getting better-trained county superintendents who had more experience, held their positions longer, made more professional in-service improvement, and provided higher-quality leadership. Butterworth's⁹ study, made about the same time, pointed to much the same general conclusion:

These data show that, taking the States as a group, appointment by any method gives a larger percentage of superintendents who are men; a longer period of training above the elementary school; a longer administrative experience; a longer experience as county superintendent; a larger salary; a larger percentage who were holding an administrative position when first elected as county superintendent; and a somewhat smaller percentage who were holding a noneducational position when first selected as county superintendent.

The 1950 yearbook of the Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, presented an analysis¹⁰ of more recent data supporting the major conclusions of earlier studies. Of the twelve states requiring the county or intermediate district superintendent to have five or more years of college preparation, all employed the appointive method exclusively; but in the sixteen states requiring less than four years of college preparation, all county superintendents except for forty-two in Tennessee were elected by popular vote. Of the twelve states having the highest salary medians, ranging from \$4833 in Utah to \$6500 in Maryland, all but two (California and Illinois)

⁸ E. L. Tink, *Certain Phases of County Educational Organization*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1929, Contributions to Education, No. 363.

⁹ Julian E. Butterworth, *The County Superintendent in the United States*, Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., U.S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1932, No. 6, p. 44.

¹⁰ Shirley Cooper (ed.), *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, Yearbook of the NEA Department of Rural Education, the Department, Washington, D.C., 1950, Chapter II.

used the appointive method of selection exclusively; but in the twelve states having the lowest salary medians, ranging from \$1800 in Colorado to \$2750 in Minnesota, all county superintendents were elected by popular vote. Of all appointive county superintendents, including union superintendents in New England and district superintendents in New York, 64 percent had been in office for six or more years; but of those elected by popular vote, 48.2 percent had held office for that length of time.

While such comparisons show striking differences favoring the appointive method, the full picture is not completely one of vivid contrasts. A sizable number of popularly elected county superintendents, particularly those in densely populated counties, have levels of professional preparation and a salary status quite comparable to those appointed to their positions in similar situations. In fact, one of the major reasons why the elective method compares so unfavorably is its widespread use in the more sparsely populated areas of the country where the intermediate district has not been so fully developed.

Much the same is true concerning the elective method always involving the county superintendent in partisan politics. The bleak picture Cubberley¹¹ painted of the situation two decades ago does not hold today everywhere the elective method is used. As noted earlier some states now use nonpartisan ballots. Moreover, there are counties in other states where the people and the educational forces in the county have been successful in keeping the position from becoming tainted with partisan politics. Besides it is a well-known fact that the appointment method unfortunately sometimes becomes enmeshed in political maneuvering.

The fundamental issue involved is not so much a question of popular election or of appointment but rather of using the best possible method, consistent with democratic principles of public school administration, for getting high-quality administrative leadership. Such a method should have the following characteristics:

1. The method of selection should be democratic, supporting and strengthening the principle of local control. In most instances election by popular vote meets this criterion admirably where there are no

¹¹ Ellwood P. Cubberley, *op. cit.*, pp. 664-669.

county boards of education. However, there are many counties with city school systems completely independent of the jurisdiction of the county superintendent where the entire electorate, urban and rural, makes the selection. In some of these situations there are more urban than rural voters. Where there is a popularly elected county board, popular election of the county superintendent tends to weaken rather than strengthen local control by placing policy-making and executive functions in separate camps.

On the other hand not all appointive methods meet this criterion satisfactorily. Where the appointment is made at the state level, it is too far removed from the people if there is any validity to the principle that the appointing person, or agency, should be their elected representative. This would still hold where appointment at the state level was made by an elective official, because his election would not be dependent on the people of a single county. The same is true where appointive boards appoint the county superintendent, because it places him as a representative of the people too far removed from their oversight and control. The remedy for such conditions, so far as supporting and strengthening local control are concerned, would lie not in electing the county superintendent by popular vote but in electing the county board of education which appoints him.

2. Selection should be completely divorced from partisan politics. The key importance of this criterion is undisputed either by exponents of the appointment method or the defenders of popular election. It may well be that the states using nonpartisan ballots have achieved a large measure of success, but the use of this device is by no means widespread. As for the appointive method, while it is true that a popularly elected board might in some instances be subject to political pressures in appointing the county superintendent, well-established experience indicates that election of the board on a nonpartisan ballot in a special election, with the board being responsible for appointing the superintendent, is the surest method yet devised for keeping partisan politics out of school affairs.

3. The method should discourage widespread and sudden uprooting of a state's county educational leadership. Anyone who has read Churchill's *The Second World War* will recall the deep concern ex-

pressed in his account of the Battle of Britain that the nation's reservoir of fighter pilots, about whom he once declared, "Never was so much owed by so many to so few," was being exhausted faster than replacements could be trained. In a less dramatic way there is a growing realization in this country that our reservoir of trained school administrators is essential to the nation's well-being and that superintendents cannot be expended needlessly without inflicting grave harm on the schools. This does not mean that an occasional superintendent might not with justifiable reason fail to be reemployed. But if he is well trained and capable it should be possible for him to secure an administrative position in another system. Otherwise, whatever benefits would come to the schools from his specialized training and experience will be lost.

With respect to conserving and utilizing our stock of trained and experienced county school administrators, the elective method has grievous shortcomings. It wastes rather than conserves. It discourages utilization of the defeated incumbent's talents in another county system. All county superintendents in the state come up for reelection at the same time and those failing have no alternative but to seek another type of position, either in the schools or elsewhere. An illustration of the weaknesses of the elective method in this respect came to the attention of the author in October, 1952, when, in conversation with a Georgia county superintendent, inquiry was made concerning a highly capable young superintendent in a nearby county. The reply was: "The schools have lost him. For some reason, which even he does not know, he was defeated in the election this spring. Then the president of a manufacturing plant grabbed him and made him director of personnel." A more dramatic and startling illustration was furnished by Florida, where in 1952 a full 46 percent of the incumbent county superintendents (thirty-one of the sixty-seven) were defeated in the elections.

4. The method of selection should be highly effective in identifying capable school administrative leadership. Application of this criterion revolves around the issue of whether the entire electorate of a county or a school board elected by the people can best identify the leadership qualities and capabilities needed for the schools. Obviously, the board

has a more intimate and detailed knowledge of the capacities required for executing policies which it formulates. As a small body representing the educational interests of all citizens in the county, the board can discuss the leadership qualities needed; the board as a group can draw on professional literature for assistance in determining selection procedures to be followed,¹² and can turn to the state department of education and the state university for help in locating promising candidates;¹³ it can examine professional qualifications of candidates, interview them, and discuss who, in the light of county educational needs and the capabilities of candidates examined, would be best fitted for the position.

Such procedures are practically impossible in a county where the elective method is used. The electorate cannot act in such a concerted way and cannot make searching inquiry into candidate's professional qualifications, but is limited in its choices to those running for the office.

5. The method of selection should permit choosing a county superintendent regardless of where he resides. It is becoming more and more common for city and village boards to put professional capacity above "we must select a local man," and to go outside the community, even outside the state when that seems desirable, for the new superintendent. This practice is likewise becoming more common with respect to selecting county superintendents in states where the appointive method is used. Residence requirements where the elective method is used do not permit this and encourage an inbreeding of educational leadership within the county.

6. The method of selection should be consistent with proven principles of school administration. Of all the principles underlying the

¹² Excellent accounts of procedures which have proven effective are set forth in American Association of School Administrators, *School Boards in Action*, Twenty-Fourth Yearbook, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1946, Chapter III; and American Association of School Administrators, *Choosing the Superintendent of Schools*, special pamphlet, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1949. A number of manuals on school board procedures are also excellent sources of assistance.

¹³ The importance of having a source from which the local board can secure competent advice can hardly be overestimated. In this respect the practice in Maryland and Virginia of the state department of education maintaining lists of qualified candidates from which the county board makes its selection would appear highly desirable.

operation of public school systems none is more fundamental than the provision for a local board of education, representing the educational interests of the people, which is charged with responsibility for formulating policies necessary for carrying on the work of the schools and then seeing to it that the policies thus formulated are put in operation. The translation of educational policies into action is a professional task, equal in importance to their formulation but requiring the services of highly trained and capable school administrators. The school board-superintendent relationship in operating the schools breaks down unless the superintendent is subordinate in authority to, and is directly responsible to, the board of education formulating the policies he is charged with carrying out. The nature of this relationship makes it necessary for the board to appoint the superintendent to serve as its executive officer. Otherwise, there is no guarantee that the board's policies will be executed, because the superintendent's ultimate responsibility resides elsewhere in whomever brought him to office. The importance of having the superintendent directly responsible to his board is so great that competent authorities in school administration commonly regard his selection as the most important single function a board of education has.¹⁴

This school board-superintendent relationship, with the superintendent employed by and directly responsible to the board of education as its executive officer, is equally applicable to county unit and county, or other types of intermediate districts. As indicated in Chapter IV, a strengthening of the intermediate district where it is weakest will involve the establishment of an intermediate district board of education with power to appoint the superintendent.

RECENT PROGRESS

Although many states continue to cling to methods of selection established in pioneer days before the emergence of school administration as a profession, recent changes in three states clearly indicate that the principles stated in the preceding section point the way to

¹⁴ American Association of School Administrators, *School Boards in Action*, p. 63; Daniel R. Davies and Fred W. Hosler, *The Challenge of School Board Membership*, Chartwell House, New York, 1949, p. 107.

placing the county superintendency in a stronger professional leadership position. In 1947 Iowa established county boards of education with power to appoint the county superintendent, who prior to that time had been popularly elected. More recently Michigan enacted legislation providing for all counties regardless of size a county board of education with authority to appoint the county superintendent; before this legislation was enacted all counties under 15,000 population had no county boards and elected the county superintendent by popular vote. The most recent action was taken by Idaho, which, as mentioned earlier, established county boards with power to appoint the county superintendent.

TERM OF OFFICE AND TENURE

Every school administrator, regardless of the size or type of school system, must have assurance of a reasonable amount of security in his position if he is to do his best work. While it is very doubtful that ironclad tenure provisions are necessary or even desirable, nevertheless the county superintendent should be able to look forward without gnawing doubts to an uninterrupted period of service in the county just as long as he provides top-quality leadership. No county school system can afford to switch administrative leaders every time their efforts have just had time to reach the flowering stage. If a county school system does, it will never harvest the fruits of the superintendent's leadership. It takes time for school administrative leadership to flower and bear fruit.

LENGTH OF TERM

Most county and intermediate district superintendents are selected for a fixed length of term. The following states prescribe a two-year term:

Arizona	New Mexico	Oklahoma
Colorado	North Carolina	South Dakota
Kansas	North Dakota	Utah

All of these nine states except New Mexico, North Carolina, and Utah have the county intermediate district organization, and all except

North Carolina and Utah elect the county superintendent by popular vote.

There are twenty states where the length of term is four years. These are:

California	Louisiana	Missouri	Texas
Florida	Maryland	Montana	Virginia
Georgia	Michigan	Nebraska	Washington
Illinois	Minnesota	Oregon	Wisconsin
Indiana	Mississippi	Pennsylvania	Wyoming

It will be noted that five (Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, and Virginia) of the nineteen are county-unit states. In only six (Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Virginia) is the county superintendent selected by the appointive method.

In addition to the states listed above, Iowa and New Jersey, both using the appointive method of selection, specify three-year terms. Vermont specifies a one-year term. In Oklahoma, Tennessee, and South Carolina, a two-year term is specified for some counties and four years for others.

There are six states where the length of term is indefinite; that is, no set number of years is prescribed. These are:

Connecticut	Massachusetts	New York
Idaho	New Hampshire	Rhode Island

However, Massachusetts does specify a three-year term for beginning superintendents, who after serving two such three-year terms may be appointed to serve at the board's discretion. Since the term of office is indefinite in these six states, the method of selection would of necessity have to be by appointment. It should be observed that all six are intermediate district states and that Idaho is the only one having county intermediate districts.

The remaining states having county or comparable area superintendents specify a range of years, giving the board of education discretion in fixing the length of term within that range. These states, with the range in years for each, are as follows:

Arkansas	1-2 years
Kentucky	1-4 "
West Virginia	1-4 "
Maine	1-5 "
Ohio	1-5 "

TENURE IN OFFICE

As a group county superintendents hold their positions nearly as long as do city superintendents and longer than superintendents of rural village systems. The 1952 yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators¹⁵ found that in 1950 the median number of years each general class of superintendents had held their present positions was as follows:

All city superintendents	6.1 years
Rural village superintendents	4.7 "
All county superintendents	5.9 "
Superintendents of intermediate districts (other than county)	6.6 "
Superintendents of county intermediate districts	6.4 "
Superintendents of county units having independent districts	6.1 "
Superintendents of complete county units	4.9 "

While the above classification does not correspond to the actual structural classification of the county and intermediate district superintendency, it does clearly indicate that intermediate district superintendents, county or otherwise, had a higher median number of years in their present positions than had superintendents of county units.

Reference was made earlier to conclusions reported in the NEA Department of Rural Education 1950 Yearbook¹⁶ concerning the longer tenure of county superintendents selected by the appointive method. This study showed great variations among states, which in all instances could not be attributed to a single factor, such as method of selection or type of organization. The following examples, showing the percentage of county superintendents who had held their present

¹⁵ American Association of School Administrators, *The American School Superintendency*, pp. 449-457.

¹⁶ *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, pp. 182-183.

positions for six or more years, serve to illustrate these variations among states:

<i>State</i>	<i>Type of Organization</i>	<i>Method of Selection</i>	<i>Percent in Office Six or More Years</i>
Georgia	County unit	Popular vote	12.5
Florida	County unit	Popular vote	25.6
Colorado	County intermediate	Popular vote	30.1
Pennsylvania	County intermediate	Appointive	74.4
Illinois	County intermediate	Popular vote	82.2

The percentages of all county and intermediate district superintendents who had held office for six or more years is shown in the following classification according to method of selection:

	<i>Elective</i>	<i>Appointive</i>
Intermediate district superintendents (other than county)	None elected	68.9
County Intermediate district superintendents	53.4	62.6
County unit	27.1	60.6
All county and intermediate district superintendents	48.2	64.0

These percentages clearly show that elective county superintendents in the county-unit states have shorter tenure than any other group. Even the county-unit states using the appointive method do not measure up as well as might be expected in comparison with other states using the appointive method. This suggests the need for a concentrated, statewide effort in assisting school boards and the lay public in general to gain a thorough understanding of the importance of using sound procedures in selecting their county superintendent and retaining him just as long as his leadership is effective.

In fact, every state could well afford to undertake such a program as part of a long-time effort to improve its county educational leadership. Such a program could well involve the state school boards association, the state PTA organization, state farm organizations, and other groups interested in the quality of educational leadership serving rural children and youth.

PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION

Public school administration as a profession is relatively young. More recent to emerge on the American scene in full-fledged form than practically any other established profession, it is almost wholly a development of the present century. It has been well stated that fifty years ago school executives had to learn to do their work by practicing on school systems because their professional preparation was limited to that intended for classroom teachers.¹⁷

Viewed from the vantage point of present-day levels of progress, it is abundantly clear that school administration as a profession has come of age. One of the clearest indications of this is the growing realization that all public school administrators regardless of the size or type of school system must have professional preparation to provide the quality of leadership services that are needed. The rural county has the same need for well-trained educational leadership that the great metropolitan center has. An ever growing number of counties are getting such leadership.

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

In 1880 college or normal school graduation was not specifically required of county superintendents by any state. Even by 1930 only four required that amount of educational preparation.¹⁸

Remarkable progress has been made within the past two decades, both in county-unit and intermediate district states. By 1950 each of the following states, classified by type of structural organization, required at least five years of college preparation:¹⁹

<i>County Unit</i>	<i>County Intermediate</i>	<i>Intermediate Other than County</i>
Louisiana	Illinois	Connecticut
Maryland	Indiana	New Hampshire
Utah	Iowa	New York
Virginia	Ohio	Vermont
	Pennsylvania	

¹⁷ John K. Norton, "Building the Profession of Educational Administration—the Road Ahead," *The School Executive*, November, 1950, pp. 38–41.

¹⁸ N. William Newsom, *op. cit.*, pp. 37–38.

¹⁹ The following information on educational requirements has been largely drawn

In addition, the following seventeen states required four years of college work for all county and intermediate district superintendents:

<i>County Unit</i>	<i>County Intermediate</i>	<i>Intermediate Other than County</i>
Alabama	Arizona	New Jersey
Florida	Arkansas	Oklahoma
Kentucky	California	Oregon
North Carolina	Michigan	Washington
West Virginia	Missouri	Wisconsin
		Maine
		Massachusetts

In Michigan superintendents of counties above 30,000 population must have five years of college, but those of under 30,000 only four. Florida's educational requirements were declared invalid in 1952 by court action on the ground that educational qualifications could not be required of elective officials.

There are ten states, none of which require as much as four years of college of all county superintendents but all of which require some college preparation. Only one of these, Tennessee, which requires a minimum of two years of college, is a county-unit state. All the others are county intermediate district states. Colorado is the only one requiring as much as three years of college of all county superintendents. Idaho, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming each require two years. Texas requires two years for all county superintendents, except for counties having less than 3000 scholastic population, where the county judge serves as ex officio county superintendent.²⁰ Kansas and Nebraska require but one year of college for superintendents of smaller counties, but four years for those in counties with populations over 15,000 and 6500, respectively.

There are two county intermediate district states, Minnesota and South Carolina, and two county-unit states, Georgia and New Mexico, where no educational qualifications are required of county superin-

from *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, except, in a number of instances, reference was made to requirements specified in school laws published by state departments of education.

²⁰ Texas Education Agency, *Public School Law Bulletin*, the Agency, Austin, 1952, No. 527, pp. 42-339.

tendents. Georgia at one time required four years of college, but this was invalidated on grounds that educational qualifications could not be required of elective officials. Invalidation of Florida's educational requirement has already been mentioned.

It would be difficult to minimize the handicaps to educational progress which a state perpetuates when it fails to establish, or is unable to maintain, adequate standards of professional preparation for its county educational leaders. In fact, the handicaps imposed by low educational qualifications or none at all are greatly increased by the popular-vote method of selection which, as noted earlier, is used almost universally where these conditions prevail. The need for adequate standards is actually greater in such situations than where the appointive method is used. Even where the qualifications are not as high as they should be, a forward-looking board of education may set its own standards and then find the man who meets them satisfactorily.

Moreover, improvements in the structural organization often stimulate county superintendents themselves to upgrade their professional status. An illustration of what happens when a county board of education with appointive powers is established was furnished by Idaho's state superintendent in early 1952 when he stated: "At the time of our state survey [in 1947] only four county superintendents had four years of college. At present 24 have college degrees."²¹

REQUIREMENTS EXCEEDED

One of the most encouraging aspects of the rapid development of the county superintendency as a profession is the widespread practice of county superintendents securing a greater amount of educational preparation than specified by state standards. This has happened both where educational requirements are high and where they are low. County superintendents holding Ph.D. degrees and those working toward them are becoming increasingly common. It is not at all uncommon for a majority of county superintendents to hold master's degrees in a state requiring but four years of college, or for a majority

²¹ Statement made by Alton B. Jones, Idaho State Superintendent of Public Instruction, during a county superintendents' conference in Portland, Oregon, March, 1952.

to hold a bachelor's degree where less than four years is required. For example, in 1951 over half Nebraska's county superintendents held bachelor's degrees and thirteen of the eighty-six held master's degrees even though minimum requirements were very much lower.²²

In 1950 the median level of college preparation for all county superintendents was 5.1 years. This compares quite favorably with the medians for city and rural village superintendents, which were 5.9 years and 5.6 years, respectively.²³ However, this comparison does not show the entire picture because only the median number of years of college preparation is given. There are still many county superintendents, but very few city superintendents, who do not hold college degrees, as indicated below.²⁴

	Percent of County Supts.	Percent of Rural Village Supts.	Percent of City Supts.
No college degree held	13.0	0.2	0.2
Bachelor's degree	35.6	7.5	5.5
Master's degree	48.5	79.5	78.7
Earned doctor's degree	2.0	2.3	14.0

Although both city and village superintendents have a stronger status in terms of educational preparation, this is no cause for pessimism concerning either the present or future professional status of the county superintendency. The fact that half the county superintendents of the country hold master's degrees or better, the greater number of whom work in states requiring less than that amount of training, provides genuine proof that county superintendents themselves realize their profession has come of age and are preparing themselves to meet its challenges more effectively.

Of equal, or perhaps even greater, significance is the type of graduate work completed. Over half (57.2 percent) majored in school administration and over one-fifth majored in either elementary or secondary education. The New England and New York State intermediate

²² Unpublished data compiled by A. R. Lichtenberger, Director of Research, State Department of Public Instruction, Lincoln, Nebraska.

²³ American Association of School Administrators, *The American School Superintendency*, pp. 448-457.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 449-458.

district superintendents, not included in the above percentages, had an even greater number (71.5 percent) majoring in school administration.²⁵

ADMINISTRATORS' CERTIFICATES

One of the contributing factors to the development of the county superintendency as a profession has been the establishment of certification standards for the position. All states have certification requirements for teachers and in many instances one or more of the certificates qualifying a teacher may qualify a county superintendent as well, no other or additional college courses being required.²⁶ In other instances even teachers' certification requirements do not apply, notably in Minnesota, New Mexico, and South Carolina, mentioned earlier as having no educational requirements for county superintendents. But a growing number of states have come to realize that not only some kind of certification is essential but also that the certification standards teachers must meet are not necessarily the most satisfactory for school administrators, including county superintendents, and that a special administrator's certificate is necessary.

Sixteen states²⁷ (Alabama, California, Iowa, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Utah, and Vermont) have administrators' certificates which all county or intermediate district superintendents are required to hold. Although Virginia does not issue an administrator's certificate, the qualifications set up for the eligibility list maintained by the state board of education make this list in effect a certifying process.

Three other states have administrators' certificates which, with certain exceptions, are required of county superintendents. In Pennsyl-

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 458.

²⁶ South Dakota furnishes a good example of this. The laws provide that county superintendents must hold at least a state certificate, which is issued to elementary teachers and is based on two years' work in an approved state normal school. South Dakota State Department of Public Instruction, *The School Laws of South Dakota*, 1951, Midwest Beach Company, Sioux Falls, 1951, pp. 14, 112.

²⁷ Information on certification has been drawn in part from National Education Association, *Legal Status of the School Superintendent*, and in part from state school laws published by state departments of education.

cational psychology. He also must have at least a passing acquaintance with the other basic fields. But an educational administrator must have a thorough background in the social studies not only of education but also of life at large. How can a superintendent . . . reflect a sound administrative philosophy unless he is intimately conversant with matters of state and society as revealed in sociology, economics and political science? Likewise, how can an administrator intelligently select, place, stimulate, guide and evaluate human energy for the good of childhood unless he thoroughly understands children?²⁰

The fruits of two decades of progress have established the widespread prevalence of that view today. Its application to preparation of county school administrators for educational leadership is unquestioned. The necessity for adequate preparation in the technical aspects of school administration is greater today for county superintendents than ever before. But of even greater importance is a thorough preparation in the larger, more vital role of county school administration. Competence in manipulating the technical aspects of school administration does not suffice.

County school administrators require the kind of preparation which is patterned on the realities of the situations where they work. If that preparation is to be as effective as it should be, it will provide a depth of understanding of the distinctive aspects of the rural portion of our culture, the problems and issues, the directions of change affecting rural life, and the socioeconomic conditions giving rise to distinctive educational needs. It will provide a knowledge of the institutions and organizations, the customs and traditions, the habits and attitudes, and the patterns of group action that characterize rural people and rural life. It will provide competence in working with rural people, in identifying their leaders and how to utilize that leadership. It will give competence in the techniques and skills of working democratically with teachers, pupils, principals, parents, and all interested groups in the county to determine the real educational needs of children and youth, and to plan and establish school programs meeting those needs in a functional way. Like the technical aspects of administration, these

²⁰ John Guy Fowlkes, "A Program for Continued Progress in School Administration," *The Nation's Schools*, April, 1951, pp. 38-41.

understandings and competencies can be taught. Securing them is a vital element in the county superintendent's preparation for his work.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Most states require previous professional experience of county superintendents. While there is great variation in these requirements, there is widespread evidence that some experience in classroom teaching is regarded as an important qualification. Although most states require teaching experience only, six states also specify previous administrative experience as a requirement. The amounts³⁰ which each of these states require are as follows:

	<i>Years Teaching</i>		<i>Years Administrative</i>
Connecticut	3	and	2
Massachusetts	5	and	3
New Hampshire	3	and	2
Vermont	3	and	2
Ohio	3	and	3
Pennsylvania	3	and	3

Virginia requires three years previous experience as a principal or supervisor but no teaching experience. On the other hand, seven states require either teaching or administrative experience, in the following amounts:

	<i>Years Teaching</i>		<i>Years Administrative</i>
Arkansas	5	or	3
Indiana	5	or	5
Missouri	2	or	2
New York	5	or	5
Oregon	3	or	3
Utah	3	or	3
West Virginia	5	or	5

³⁰ Sources: Council of State Governments, *The Forty-Eight State School Systems*, the Council, Chicago, 1949, p. 198; National Education Association, *Legal Status of the School Superintendent*, pp. 96-103.

Of the states requiring teaching experience only, three (Iowa, Louisiana, and Michigan) require five years, two (Illinois and Oklahoma) require four years, four (Alabama, Maine, Montana, and North Carolina) require three years, eleven (California, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, North Dakota, South Dakota, Tennessee, Washington, and Wisconsin) require two years, and Colorado requires one year.

There is evidence that county superintendents as a group exceed these requirements by a wide margin. In 1950 those studied³¹ (a total of 851, not including New England and New York intermediate district superintendents) had a median of 25.2 years' total experience, 8.4 years of which were spent as school administrators. The corresponding medians for the New England and New York intermediate district superintendents were 24 years of total experience and 10.5 years of administrative experience. That the wide difference between these medians indicates that most county superintendents bring to their positions a lengthy background is shown by the percentages of county superintendents who reported holding the following positions:

	<i>Percent</i>
Elementary school teacher	70.7
High school teacher	69.7
High school principal	42.4
Principal of combined elem. and high school	40.5
Elementary school principal	39.5
Assistant supt. of county or rural school system	10.5
Assistant supt., city school system	1.6

It may be observed from these percentages that many county superintendents must have held more than one type of school position before holding their present positions. Indeed, the large number previously serving as school principals, together with the still larger number having been teachers, indicate that many had a broad background both of teaching and administrative experience.

Some observers are inclined to take a somewhat dim view of the

³¹ American Association of School Administrators, *The American School Superintendency*, p. 456.

importance of professional experience for school administrators. Some say that, while it has great potential value, often it is of such quality that its value is doubtful. This view overlooks the chief reason why previous professional experience is important. Its value lies not in observing a master superintendent in operation and learning from him how to administrate. Instead, its chief value lies in the understanding it gives of the teacher's, or principal's work; the opportunities it affords to know firsthand the processes involved in working with children, in determining their educational needs, adapting instruction to those needs, and using all available school and community resources to that end; to know firsthand the teacher's role in working with parents and fellow teachers in strengthening the bonds of school, home, and community. The teacher who does not capitalize on experiences such as these, regardless of the school system where he works, would be questionable for a larger leadership position. On the other hand, a superintendent who has had such opportunities and has capitalized on them has insights, understandings, skills, and a point of view which would be extremely difficult to get by any other means.

SALARIES

The issue of providing an adequate salary for the county superintendent is, or should be, a matter of direct concern not only to the county superintendent himself and the board of education, or whoever determines what it will be, but also to the people of the county and even of the state as well. In the final analysis, no one can rightly expect the county school system to attract and hold the most capable administrative leadership unless the position offers a reasonable amount of attractiveness in salary. If pennies are pinched in fixing the county superintendent's salary, the school system stands in grave danger of being unable to harvest the fruits which capable administrative leadership can bring. Every county school system should be in position to provide an adequate salary for the quality of leadership needed.

WIDE VARIATIONS

As might be expected, there are great differences in the salaries paid county superintendents. Variations in size of county school systems

alone would account for some salaries being higher than others. But other factors evidently are present besides size.

In the 1947-1948 school year, eight states (California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, New York, and Pennsylvania) had one or more county superintendents receiving annual salaries of \$10,000 or more.³² On the other hand less than 10 percent of all county superintendents received salaries of \$6000 or more. The median for the entire country was \$4010. But there were nine states (Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Washington) where no county superintendent, regardless of the size of his school system, received as much as \$4000 annually. More recent evidence indicates improvement in a number of states, although in 1950 the median for the county-unit and county intermediate district superintendents studied³³ was only \$4551.

Obviously, action will have to be taken in many states before the salaries can be raised to the point where the county superintendency is made attractive financially. It is a problem in which all the educational forces of a state might join together in working out a solution.

ACTION NEEDED

Although it would seem undesirable for any state to decree the maximum amount a county board of education might pay the county superintendent, it would seem highly desirable to establish a floor below which no board of education, or other agency responsible for fixing the salary, would be permitted to go. A number of states have done this and have raised the minimum salary permitted during the present period of high prices.

But of even greater importance is setting this floor high enough so that every county, regardless of its small size or lack of wealth, would be in position to attract a well-qualified, capable county superintendent. The idea that smaller, more sparsely settled counties do not need as well-prepared superintendents as the larger, more densely populated counties has persisted entirely too long. If five years of college prepara-

³² National Education Association, *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, pp. 184-186.

³³ American Association of School Administrators, *The American School Superintendency*, p. 460.

tion are considered necessary for superintendents of large counties, the need for that amount of preparation is equally great for administrators of smaller counties. Children living in sparsely settled counties are not second rate, and the job of administering schools which meet their educational needs is not a second-rate task requiring lower levels of professional preparation.

Regardless of whether the county is unable or unwilling to pay a salary adequate to attract and hold a high quality of educational leadership, the interests of the state in providing equal educational opportunities to all its children and youth would demand that such leadership be provided. If any county lacked the financial resources, then it would be a sound investment for the state to render whatever financial assistance might be necessary.

PROSPECTS OF FUTURE PROGRESS

Anyone entertaining any doubts about the future progress of the county and intermediate district superintendency might well pause and take stock of what is happening to the position across the country. There are a number of unmistakable evidences not only that genuine progress is presently underway but also that this progress will continue in the years ahead.

Admittedly, the position has not everywhere kept pace of changing times and conditions. However, the need for overcoming the limitations of the position where they exist is no reason at all for viewing the future with misgiving. Rather, it is cause for a redoubling of efforts to make the position what the educational needs of children and youth in the county demand that it should be.

For the past few years a number of developments have taken place, all of which already have brought, and are continuing to bring, significant gains. All of these directly involve county superintendents themselves.

NATIONWIDE ACTIVITIES

Six years ago the NEA Department of Rural Education Division of County and Rural Area Superintendents held its first national conference in Des Moines, Iowa. National conferences have been held every

year since that time. From the first one held to that held in New York City in October, 1952, these annual conferences have attracted county superintendents from every section of the country.

Conference programs are planned by county superintendents themselves, with the advice and counsel of staff members of the NEA Rural Service Division. Each conference has featured the active participation of all county superintendents attending, with full opportunity to exchange views and learn about current developments across the country.

Also of great significance has been the increased emphasis given to the problems of the county superintendent by the American Association of School Administrators in its annual conventions and in other activities. In recent years it has not been at all uncommon for a full third of the threescore or more discussion groups to be devoted to the problems of county superintendents. Drawing county superintendents from every region of the country, these meetings, like the annual conferences mentioned above, have been of great worth in providing in-service growth.

In 1949 the Cooperative Program in Educational Administration, financed by the Kellogg Foundation, was established to bring about improvements in educational administration. Operating on a nationwide basis, with centers established in eight major universities and with the great majority of universities of the country participating, this program has resulted in the initiation of a number of significant projects aimed at the improvement of county school administration. It is especially noteworthy that in each instance county superintendents, assisted by consultants from universities, colleges, and elsewhere, have taken a major part in carrying on the projects.

STATE GROUPS

During the past decade and particularly during the past three years, an increasing number of in-service programs and other activities have been organized for improving the county superintendents' leadership. State universities have taken a leading part in this movement. Many of them hold annual summer workshops or conferences which deal with problems and issues that county superintendents express the need for assistance in solving. For example, the annual county superin-

tendents' institute held by the University of Wisconsin is planned by the county superintendents themselves with the assistance of staff members in the School of Education. Actually, the University acts as a service station, making available whatever resources and consultants are needed to shape the program to county superintendents' needs.

In addition, most of the projects mentioned above which have been initiated for county superintendents have been organized on a state basis with one or more colleges or universities assisting. Thus, Columbia University furnished a consultant to assist New York State district superintendents on a two-year study analyzing the functions of their position and the services it should provide. West Virginia University did the same thing in helping the county superintendents in that state conduct a long-time study of how their leadership might be improved. In a number of other states much the same pattern has been followed. In the autumn of 1952, county superintendents in Idaho, Illinois, Montana, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin were actively engaged in studies aimed at improving the quality of their leadership to the schools.

In viewing the widespread extent of all this searching for more and better ways to serve the educational interests of county people, it seems certain that better ways will be found and that the upsweep of county educational leadership, rising so markedly in the last two decades, will continue to rise.

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Butterworth, Julian E., *The County Superintendent in the United States*, U.S. Office of Education Bulletin, Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1932, No. 6.

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A study of the organization of state departments of education, local, and intermediate school districts. An analysis of the salary and educational requirements of county superintendents is presented. Cooper, Shirley (ed.), *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, Yearbook of the Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1950.

The most comprehensive publication which is devoted exclusively to the county superintendent of schools and his work. Chapter II deals entirely with the county superintendent's professional status. Other chapters deal with the structural framework of the county superintendency and give numerous illustrations of the wide range of leadership functions within that framework.

CHAPTER VI

The County Unit of School Administration

The county unit of school administration is an organization through which a system of local schools is operated. It is identified with the county because the boundaries of the area it serves generally coincide with or are approximately the same as the boundaries of a civil county. There are no subordinate boards of education or other administrative organization within the limits of its jurisdiction that exercise the function of general public school administration. It is a single unified school district comprised of a number of neighborhoods and communities. It is uniquely adapted to the administration of schools in rural areas.

The county unit of school administration is controlled by a representative lay board. Responsibility for the direct administration of schools is delegated by the board to a school superintendent. All school personnel employed in the county-unit district are directly or indirectly responsible to the superintendent. There is but one educational budget and one center of general control in the entire unit.

The county unit is one of the most recent inventions in the field of local public school administration. Most county-unit systems have been established during the last half century. In contrast, township and common school districts have been familiar patterns of school administration since the beginning of public education in this country. With such a background of experience it has been difficult for laymen fully to comprehend an organization that brings several different com-

munities of people distributed over an area, in many instances of several hundred square miles, together into a single working organization for the support and control of local schools. The tendency to confuse the county unit as a local school district with the county as an intermediate district has added to the difficulty of fully understanding the county unit.

NUMBER OF COUNTY UNITS

In twelve states the county or a subdivision of the state comparable to the county constitutes the local unit of school administration (see Table 10). In several additional states there are scattered examples of

TABLE 10. Local Administrative Units in the Twelve County-Unit States in 1948^a

States	Local Units Comprised of an Entire County	Complete County Units Except for Independent Districts	Other Administra- tive Units	Total Number of Administrative Units
Alabama	37	30	41	108
Florida	67	—	—	67
Georgia	125	34	34	193
Kentucky	34	86	136	256
Louisiana	61	3	3	67
Maryland	23	—	1	24
New Mexico	1	30	72	103
North Carolina	48	52	72	172
Tennessee	53	42	55	150
Utah	24	11	5	40
Virginia	76	12	22	110
West Virginia	55	—	—	55
Total	604	300	441	1345

^a Howard A. Dawson and others, *Your School District*, the report of the National Commission on School District Reorganization, Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1948, Table III, p. 261.

county units, most of which have been formed in recent programs of school district reorganization. There are at least five complete county units in Oregon, three in Colorado, one in Minnesota, one in Indiana, and five in Illinois. Recently, fourteen local districts have been formed in Idaho, each of which includes all the territory in an entire county; but in these units the county superintendent continues to function in

the same area as an intermediate district officer. At the same time there is a local district superintendent in the unit responsible for the direct administration of the schools. Obviously, there is no need nor justification for a local and an intermediate district administrative organization to function at the same time in a single area. Undoubtedly, legislation will be enacted in the near future which will correct this situation.

There are only two states, Florida and West Virginia, in which the territory included in each and every local administrative unit is identical with the area in a county. Each county administrative unit is managed as an educational and financial unit by the county board of education acting through the county superintendent as its chief executive officer. There are no other local public school districts, rural or urban. Each city is a part of the administrative organization of the county in which it is located. Neither are there any intermediate district organizations. Communications between the state department of education and the county school districts are direct.

Differences in state constitutional provisions related to the organization and operation of schools, legislative enactments, geographic conditions, population density, and backgrounds of educational experience have led to variations among the various county-unit states in the legal framework within which county units are organized and operated. Such variations are not uncommon; nor are they unique to county units of administration. They exist in the backgrounds of all organizations for the control of local schools. But there are also many basic principles of sound public school administration that are common to all local county school districts. Brief overviews of county-unit district organization in the county-unit states reveal these similarities and differences and add to the understanding of this type of local school administration.

WEST VIRGINIA

Prior to 1933, organization for the operation and support of schools in the State of West Virginia was essentially a township-unit system. There are in the entire state fifty-five counties. These counties were subdivided into approximately 400 governmental subdivisions, each of which constituted a local unit of school administration. Certain ad-

ministrative functions were performed by state officials and some clerical and administrative responsibilities were vested in the county superintendent, the only county school official in the state school system; but direct authority for the administrative control of local public schools and major responsibility for the support of public education were placed on the local district.

The manner in which these local districts had been created resulted in considerable variation in geographic area, size of school population, extent of taxable wealth, and quality of educational program provided. When the state constitution was adopted, it provided that each county should be divided into areas for the purpose of electing justices of the peace. Boundaries of these areas frequently were fixed by the course of streams or followed the tops of mountain ranges, with resultant irregularity in shape and size. These local judicial districts became the local units of school administration. Since the educational program in each district depended primarily upon local financial support and leadership, there were about as many kinds of educational programs in the state as there were school districts.

In each local district a board of education elected by popular vote exercised general control over the schools. It was the duty of the board to levy school taxes, fix the length of the school term, determine the boundaries of attendance areas and the number of schools that would be operated, purchase school lands and construct buildings, prepare and control the school budget, employ teachers and other school personnel, establish salary schedules, and provide general supervision over the instructional program. In the more populous and wealthier districts superintendents were employed who served as chief executive officers for the board. In the smaller districts boards of education performed their functions without the professional assistance of a local superintendent.

By act of the legislature in 1933 every existing local district in the state was abolished and the county was established as the local administrative unit. Instead of there being approximately 400 school districts in the state there were, after this legislative action became effective, but 55. The boundaries of each district were identical with the

boundaries of the civil county. No city school systems were excepted. Each city became an integral part of a county-unit district. The responsibility for the operation and control of schools which had been vested formerly in the smaller districts was completely transferred to the county level. The county became the local unit of school administration.

COUNTY-UNIT BOARD

The reorganization law provided for a county board of education. The first boards were appointed by the state superintendent of public instruction to serve until boards could be elected at a regular election. Most of the men and women appointed had served as members of district boards. Consequently, they were acquainted with educational problems and experiences in managing school affairs, but they found their new positions difficult. They now were confronted with the problem of comprehending the school system for the county as a whole, whereas in their previous positions they had been concerned with the administration of schools in a particular section of the county. For a time each board member tended to consider himself as a representative from his former local district and deemed it to be his function to get as large a share of county educational resources as possible directed to his former district. Furthermore, their actions reflected the general feeling of the people in their home communities.

In the management of schools it is seldom that actual practice deviates far from the actual feelings, opinions, and beliefs of people. It was so in this instance, but conditions soon changed. It was the intent of the county-unit plan of organization that each member of the board of education, no matter where he happened to live, represent the county at large and assume his responsibility for all public education in the county. With a few years of experience, in which the citizens in the local neighborhoods and communities began to understand and accept this concept of educational control and board members got a grasp of county educational problems as a whole, the functioning of the county unit rapidly assumed the character of a well-integrated local district.

SUPERINTENDENT OF THE COUNTY UNIT

The county superintendents who were in office at the time the county unit became effective continued in office until the expiration of the term for which they had been elected. The situation confronting them in this new unit of administration was, perhaps, more difficult than that of boards of education. Suddenly, their position had changed from an intermediate district officer to a local school superintendent. As intermediate district superintendents they had held institutes for teachers, visited schools, and advised with board members on the location and construction of school buildings. They had recommended teachers for employment, suggested the addition of new courses to the curriculum, and made recommendations concerning the purchase of supplies and equipment. For the most part, they served in a general leadership and advisory capacity. Final responsibility for action rested with the local boards.

As chief executive officer of a county unit the superintendent was in a quite different situation. Through action of the county board, he became directly responsible for the operation of every school in the county. He was confronted with the task of employing teachers, purchasing instructional supplies, and arranging for heat, water, and electric power to operate the schools. Buildings had to be cleaned, repaired, and made ready for the use of children and teachers; buses were to be purchased and transportation schedules planned for every part of the county; purchasing and accounting procedures had to be established; and a budget had to be planned and administered that was fair to all parts of the county and that would provide a full term of school. There was but one budget, one purchasing agent, and one center of educational control. Levy rates, length of the school term, and teachers' salary schedules became uniform throughout the county. In every way possible it was the superintendent's responsibility to see that all children in the school system had equal educational opportunities.

UNITS OF ORGANIZATION

Students of school administration have identified and described three general types of local units of school organization and administrative

control, each of which is determined by the function performed. These are *attendance areas*, *fiscal units*, and *administrative units*.

School Attendance Area. The area in which children live who attend a particular school constitutes an attendance area whether it be an elementary or a secondary school. The area in which children live who attend an elementary school is an elementary attendance area; the territory in which children live who attend a particular secondary school is a secondary attendance area. These areas may or may not be coterminous. Quite frequently, the secondary attendance area includes two or more elementary attendance areas, largely because older children can travel a greater distance in going to and from school than younger children enrolled in the elementary grades, and because the pupil population enrolled in the traditional high school grades is usually considerably smaller than the pupil population of elementary school age.

In the common school district which supports and operates only a one-teacher school, the attendance area is identical with the administrative unit unless pupils from outside the limits of the district are enrolled in the school.

School Fiscal Unit. A school fiscal unit is a geographic area which serves as a unit of taxation for local school support. In general, there is uniformity in the tax rate throughout this area.¹

School Administrative Unit. A local school administrative unit is a geographic area within which a single board of education or school officer has responsibility for the direct administration of all schools. It is the unit of administrative control closest to the people; it is a quasi corporation; and it has complete or partial autonomy in the administration of all public schools within its boundaries.²

The county unit in West Virginia is a local administrative unit and at the same time a local fiscal unit. All funds that are raised locally through taxation for the support of public schools are raised by a levy order issued by the county board of education on all taxable property

¹ Henry F. Alves, Archibald W. Anderson, and John Guy Fowlkes, *Local School Unit Organization in Ten States*, U.S. Office of Education, 1938, Bulletin No. 10, pp. 1-2.

² Howard A. Dawson and others, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

within the unit. These funds are administered by the same board for the operation of schools throughout the same unit.

Each county unit has within its limits several elementary and secondary school attendance areas, the number being determined by the size of the geographic area, total school population, and extent to which school consolidation has taken place within each county unit district. Since the board of education is empowered to make changes in the boundaries of attendance areas and to combine schools when necessary, the number of attendance areas in each county unit may change from year to year. To illustrate, in one county there were three secondary school attendance areas and sixty elementary attendance areas at the time the county unit was formed. During a period of ten years the number of elementary attendance areas was reduced to thirty-six through reorganization of attendance areas. At the end of this period there continued to be three secondary school attendance areas. In county units where the school population is increasing, the number of attendance areas may become greater rather than diminish as new buildings are constructed and new schools are established.

MARYLAND

In most county-unit states one or more cities and sometimes rural districts are organized independently from the county units. Such districts are frequently referred to as independent districts because they operate separately from the county units. To illustrate, in Maryland the city of Baltimore is not a part of any county-unit district. There are in this state the twenty-three county unit districts and the Baltimore City School District, making a total of twenty-four districts in the entire state.

The county unit in Maryland was established about 1865 and with some minor changes, which have tended to strengthen this organization as a unit of school administration, it has continued uninterrupted to the present date. Responsibility for the administration of schools in each district is placed on a board of education which is appointed by the governor for a term of six years. The board appoints a superintendent of schools subject to the approval of the state superintendent of public instruction. In actual practice the board selects a superintendent from a list of persons whom the state superintendent has certi-

fied as being eligible for the position. Such approval is in effect a type of certification.

A provision in the Maryland county-unit law for a board of trustees in each attendance area is, undoubtedly, a carry-over from the days in which poor transportation and communication facilities made it difficult for the county superintendent's office to keep in close contact with outlying rural schools. These trustees, who are appointed by the county superintendent, are charged with the responsibility for the care of buildings. According to law, they may refuse to accept teachers who have been appointed by the county board of education to teach their schools. The number of such refusals by a board of trustees in any one year cannot exceed three. Most counties continue the practice of appointing boards of trustees in compliance with the law, but the trustees seldom perform any important functions.

FLORIDA

Each of the sixty-seven counties in Florida constitutes a local unit of school administration. There are no independent districts in the state. Responsibility for general administrative control of all public schools in each county is vested in a five-member board of education which is elected by popular vote on a political ballot at a general election. The four-year terms of office are staggered so that not more than three board members are elected at one time.

For the purposes of nominating and electing school board members each county is divided into five board-member residence districts which usually conform to the boundaries of election districts for county commissioners. One board member is elected from each residence district by a countywide vote. This election district is simply a device for distributing board membership throughout the county unit of administration.

The county superintendent is a constitutional officer in the State of Florida. He is elected by popular vote on a political ballot at a general election for a four-year term of office. The only legally required qualifications for office are that he be a resident of the county and a qualified voter.

Legislation enacted in 1947 established a graduate certificate based upon graduation from an accredited, four-year college or university

as a minimum professional qualification for county superintendents. This legislation was nullified by a decision of the Supreme Court of Florida in 1952 which held this statute to be unconstitutional. In making its decision the court held that the legislature could not legally add to the qualifications established by the constitution for a constitutional officer. As the situation now stands it would be entirely possible for a person without any professional preparation whatsoever to be elected to the position of county superintendent.

Electing the county superintendent on a political ballot is, undoubtedly, a serious handicap to administrative leadership in this state. In a report of an investigation of personnel practices in Dade County, Florida, the National Commission for the Defense of Democracy pointed out five disadvantages of this method of selection.

1. The residence requirement, which is almost inherent in the elective system, limits the field from which the superintendent is selected to the county.
2. Facing a political election at the end of each four-year term in office decreases tenure and discourages capable educational leaders from seeking the position.
3. The superintendent inevitably becomes involved in partisan politics. Skill in securing votes becomes more important than educational leadership and these two abilities do not necessarily go hand in hand.
4. There are no legally required professional qualifications for the office.
5. Responsibility is not clearly established. As chief executive officer of the board of education the county superintendent is responsible for carrying out board policy, but he is not responsible to the board for his position. His ultimate responsibility to the people for his position creates a condition conducive to bickering and quarreling between the superintendent and the board.³

LOUISIANA

Louisiana is usually classified as a county-unit state; but in reality, there are no counties in this state. The unit of local government cor-

³ National Commission for the Defense of Democracy Through Education, *Miami, Florida—An Example of the Effects of the Injection of Partisan Politics into School Administration*, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., October, 1952, pp. 35-40.

responding to the county in other states is the parish. With but three exceptions, all the territory in each parish is included in a single school district. The three exceptions are Bogalusa, Lake Charles, and Monroe. These cities are organized as independent school districts.

Members of the Louisiana parish and city boards of education are elected by popular vote for a six-year term of office. There is some variation among the different districts in the number of members on each board. In all of the parishes except Orleans, in which the city of New Orleans is located, each board member is elected as a representative of a particular section of the parish designated as a ward. Board members in Orleans Parish and in the three city school districts are elected at large.

The parish superintendent, who is appointed by the parish board for a four-year term of office, is the chief educational administrative officer for the entire parish. It has been pointed out many times that his position is much like that of a city superintendent, and indeed it is, with respect to administrative responsibility and relationship to the board of education. There is, however, one important distinction. It is the exception rather than the rule to find a parish or county that includes but one community. Larger communities with several intervening miles between centers frequently are organized as incorporated towns and villages with strong municipal government, and many smaller neighborhoods and communities are well-recognized entities. Local community pride and rivalry, as well as the activities of special-interest groups, introduce unique problems of school public relationships which must be met by the parish or county superintendent. In contrast, the city superintendent is the educational leader for a single, well-organized community.

VIRGINIA

The local unit of school administration in Virginia is known as a division. In most instances, a division is comprised of a single county, but it may be made up of a combination of counties, a combination of a county and a city, or a single city. The area in each of seventy-five divisions is identical with the area of a county; each of ten divisions is comprised of two counties; one division includes three counties; each

of two divisions is made up of a county and a city; and each of twenty-two cities constitutes a school division.

The magisterial district, which is a subdivision of the county established for law enforcement purposes, constitutes a unit for representation on the board of education. In each county a school trustee electoral committee composed of three resident qualified voters is appointed by the judge of the circuit court. This electoral committee in turn appoints the division school board members for four-year overlapping terms of office. The division superintendent is appointed by the board of education from a list of persons who have been certified as being eligible for the position by the state superintendent of public instruction.

The method of selecting the board of education in the Virginia school division has been criticized frequently because it places the control of the schools too far away from the direct action of the people. One result of such dissatisfaction had been the enactment of special legislation, applicable only to Arlington County, which provides for the election of the school board in the division by popular vote.

The Virginia school division is a fiscally dependent unit of school administration. The superintendent of schools, under the direction of the board of education, prepares a detailed statement of the school budget which is submitted to the county or city governing board for approval and with a request that the necessary levies be fixed and appropriation made to provide the funds needed in the school budget. Through these relationships the county governing board exercises general control over public funds used for school purposes. It is empowered to make changes in the total amount of the budget estimate but cannot reduce individual budget items. The school board is in the position of having to get along as best it can with the funds appropriated by the county governing board. But once the appropriation has been made and the total amount of the budget has been fixed, the county governing board has no authority to reduce it except in the same proportion that all other county or city appropriations are reduced.

UTAH

Early school legislation in Utah pertaining to the formation of county units was designed to establish school districts with pupil popu-

lation large enough to provide a comprehensive educational program. Legislation enacted in 1905 made it permissive for county commissioners to establish county-unit districts in all counties that had a school population of 3000 or more. At this time only seven of the twenty-seven counties in the state had enough children of school age to permit them to form county units under the provisions of this law.

During the ten-year period following the enactment of this legislation, population in the state increased until nine other counties became eligible to form county-unit districts. Eight counties took advantage of the permissive legislation and formed county-unit districts; four counties attempted reorganization and failed; and four counties took no official action.⁴

In 1915 legislation was enacted which made it mandatory that the small local school districts in every county be reorganized into larger administrative units. In most instances, county-unit districts were formed. There are now in the state twenty-nine counties and forty school districts. Each of the five first-class cities constitutes a school district; four counties have two school districts each; one county has three school districts; and each of twenty-four counties constitutes a single school district. The creation of more than one school district in each of five different counties was due to either a large population or to wide differences in geographic conditions.⁵

For purposes of electing school board members, each county unit district is divided into five school election precincts. A member of the school board is elected from each precinct at a special school election for a five-year term of office. The expiration date of terms of office is staggered so that there is always experienced membership on the board. The superintendent of schools is appointed by the board.

The duties of the Utah county-unit board of education are broad and many of their powers are of a discretionary nature. It may appoint all the school personnel that, in the judgment of the board, are necessary to operate the schools and may remove them from office if necessary. It may establish kindergartens, elementary schools, and high schools. It may purchase sites, construct and equip school buildings, and enter

⁴ E. Allen Bateman, *Development of the County Unit School District in Utah*, Contributions to Education No. 790, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1940.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

into contracts for educational services supplied by neighboring districts. Through the superintendent it plans the budget, holds budgetary hearings, and certifies to the county commissioners the levy rate which shall be laid on all taxable property in the district for the support and operation of schools.

The people of the state have deemed it to be the function of the board of education to exercise administrative control over the public schools and have delegated to it powers commensurate with this broad responsibility.

NEW MEXICO

The adoption of the county unit of school administration in New Mexico has not resulted in the elimination of all small rural school districts. While every county in the state has a county unit of school administration, the entire territory of but one county is included in a single school district. The county-unit school systems in general include the smaller rural schools, rural consolidated schools, and schools in towns and villages which have an average daily attendance of less than 100 pupils. They do not usually include schools in the larger municipalities, independent school districts, and union high schools. These schools are organized as separate independent districts, each having its own board of education and constituting a local fiscal unit.⁶

In the New Mexico county-unit organization there is lack of clear distinction between attendance areas and administrative units. Each county unit is divided into a number of subdivisions that retain some identity as local administrative units. Each such subdivision has an elected three-member board of school directors. The functions of school directors are determined in a large measure by action of the county board, but usually they are responsible for taking the school census and making budgetary recommendations to the county board for the operation of their own schools. This subdistrict is the unit of taxation for bonded indebtedness and direct school charges. In some instances, these subdistricts are comprised of two or more attendance areas.

The county board of education has control of all rural school funds,

⁶ John E. Brewton and others, *Public Education in New Mexico*, a Report of the New Mexico Educational Survey Board, Division of Surveys and Field Services, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, 1947, pp. 56-57.

school buildings, and school equipment. It employs and supervises the work of teachers and other personnel, enforces the compulsory attendance law, arranges for the transportation of pupils, and may bring about consolidation of schools through recommendations to the state board of education.

The county board of education consists of five members. Four members of the board are appointed by a committee consisting of the district judge, the chairman of the board of county commissioners, and the state superintendent of public instruction. Three members of the board are chosen as representatives of each of the three county-commissioner districts. One member represents the county at large. The county superintendent is the fifth member of the board.

The county superintendent of schools is elected at a general election on a partisan ballot for a two-year term of office. After he has served two consecutive terms of office he cannot succeed himself.

A review of the organization for the administration of rural schools in New Mexico gives the impression of a county unit that is gradually developing rather than one that actually exists. Too many small school districts are exempted from its jurisdiction to permit it to operate with full effectiveness and on an economically sound basis. Lack of clear distinction between attendance areas and local administrative units leads to duplication of effort and limits comprehensive educational planning. The method of selecting the county superintendent and the limitations placed on his term of office discourage capable people from seeking this position. Membership on the county board of education places the county superintendent in the position of a legislative and an executive officer at the same time. And the people in the rural districts have little direct voice in choosing the members of the board of education who are responsible for the operation of the schools in the local neighborhoods and communities.

NORTH CAROLINA

With the exception of schools in independently organized city systems, the county is the basic unit for the administration of all schools in North Carolina. There are 100 county units and 72 city school districts in the state. City and county school districts have comparable

administrative relationships to the state department of education and to the schools operated in local neighborhoods and communities.

Members of the county board of education are nominated at party primaries or conventions and are appointed by the general assembly for a two-year term of office. The county superintendent is appointed by the county board of education, subject to the approval of the state superintendent of public instruction, for a two-year term. The superintendent is ex-officio secretary of the county board and serves as its chief executive officer.

The state bears the entire current cost of operating a foundation program of education in each district for a term of nine months. County or city districts, when authorized by a vote of the people, may levy additional taxes to supplement state appropriations. The state does not provide funds to pay for the maintenance of school plants, fixed charges, and capital outlay. These funds are raised locally by district-wide levy orders. Local boards of education control and are responsible for the expenditure of school funds raised by local levies in their respective districts. They exercise a great deal of control over the expenditure of state appropriations through planning and administering the school budget. But state appropriations are not actually transferred to the county or city districts. They are paid out on the basis of warrants authorized by the board of education and drawn by the superintendent.

County-unit districts in North Carolina are usually subdivided into a number of attendance areas. The board of education appoints a school committee of not less than three nor more than five members in each subdivision. These district committees nominate and appoint principals subject to the approval of the county board. Teachers are nominated by principals and appointed by the school committee subject to the approval of the county superintendent of schools and the county board.

The county unit of school administration in North Carolina is a strong, well-organized local school district. It has complete responsibility for the location, maintenance, and construction of all school buildings; it exercises control over the selection, appointment, and placement of teachers; it plans and administers the budget; and it determines the number of schools that shall be operated and fixes the

boundaries of attendance areas. It is directly responsible to the people in the local communities on one hand and to the state department of education on the other. Its responsibilities and relationships are clearly and definitely fixed.

KENTUCKY

There are only two types of local school districts in Kentucky. These are county units and independent districts. The independent districts are usually city school systems. All of the area in each county outside of independent districts is included in the county unit of school administration.

The school law of the state makes but little discrimination between independent districts and county units. Independent districts have some advantages, because of their close relation to municipal governments, in provisions for making assesment, methods of handling bonded indebtedness, and in taxing powers, but the organization and operation of these two units of school administration are comparable.

Each county-unit district has a five-member board of education elected on a nonpartisan ballot at a general election for a four-year term of office. To insure representation of all parts of the district on the board, the county unit is divided into five areas and a board member is chosen from each area. Terms of office overlap so that there is always experienced membership on the board. The county superintendent is appointed by the board.

The typical independent school district in Kentucky is a compact community that includes an area of from six to ten square miles. It has a pupil population of from 400 to 500. In contrast, a typical county unit is made up of an area of from 250 to 500 square miles and enrolls from 2000 to 3000 pupils in its schools.⁷

A brief overview of a particular county school district, based on information taken from a 1947 survey, illustrates the character of the Kentucky county unit and the functions it performs. Harlan County⁸

⁷ H. W. Peters, *A Study of Local School Units in Kentucky*, State Department of Education, Frankfort, 1937, p. 71.

⁸ Charles R. Spain, *Public Education in Harlan County*, Bulletin of the Bureau of School Service, College of Education, University of Kentucky, Lexington, December, 1947, Vol. XX, No. 2.

is located in the Cumberland Mountains region. It has a total area of 469 square miles made up of alternating steep ridges and narrow valleys. Coal mining, the principal source of livelihood for a great majority of the inhabitants, has shaped the pattern of settlement into a number of small towns and villages near mine openings. There are four incorporated towns in the county with populations ranging from 1600 to 5000; two unincorporated coal camps, each of which has a population of more than 3000; and several coal camps with population ranging from 500 to 1500. Areas of the county outside of the mining camps are very sparsely populated.

There are three local school administrative units in Harlan County: Harlan Independent School District, which is the county seat town, with a population of about 5000; Lynch Independent School District, comprised of an unincorporated mining camp with a total population of about 6000; and Harlan County School District, which has a total population of about 65,000.

The Harlan County School District operates eighty-one elementary schools and eight high schools. Each school constitutes a separate attendance area and in most instances is comprised of a neighborhood or community. Several intervening miles of mountainous terrain separate the communities into distinct sociological groups. Total enrollment in all schools is about 14,000 children.

The board of education is composed of a physician, a merchant, a farmer, a mining engineer, and a coal operator. Tenure of the board ranges from seven years to thirty-five years. Seventeen school buses, fifteen of which are owned by the school board, transport 3200 children to and from school daily.

The superintendent of schools is directly responsible to the board of education. All staff employees, all principals, and all teachers in schools that have no principal are directly responsible to the county superintendent. Teachers in the larger schools are responsible to their principals. The staff of the superintendent's office includes an assistant superintendent who also serves as high school supervisor, an elementary supervisor, two helping teachers, a health coordinator, a coordinator of distributive education, a coordinator for area trade schools, an attendance supervisor, bus drivers, and maintenance employees. Ele-

mentary principals in larger schools are designated as supervising principals.

The annual budget for the entire county school district, which is planned and administered by the county superintendent's office, was approximately \$750,000. About 14 percent of the budget is devoted to capital outlay and debt service. Administering a school system of this size in a single, compact, cohesive community is a challenging experience to any school superintendent. But when a school system of this size is distributed over an area of almost 500 square miles and includes almost a score of distinct neighborhoods and communities, it presents problems that test the powers and prove the strength of the ablest school administrator.

GEORGIA

Each of the 159 counties in the State of Georgia, exclusive of independent districts within its boundaries, is a county unit. Authority for the control of all public elementary and secondary schools within each county unit is vested in a five-member board of education. Board members are appointed by the grand jury in each county for a five-year term of office. Terms of office are staggered so that only one board member goes out of office each year.

The board is fiscally independent except for restrictions imposed by the state legislature. It may recommend a tax rate of from five to fifteen mills for current expense purposes on all taxable property within the district, which the county fiscal authorities are required by law to levy. Most of the county units in Georgia, as in other Southern states, operate what is in effect two school systems—one for whites and another for Negroes—but a single budget makes the financial provision for the operation of both school systems.

Members of the school board have no personal authority over the schools. Their power is collective and cannot be exercised legally except as the board acts as a body. The county superintendent is the executive officer of the board and is directly responsible for the administration of the schools in agreement with plans and policies adopted by the board.

The county superintendent in Georgia is a constitutional officer who

is elected for a four-year term of office that runs concurrently with the terms of office of other elective county officials. The method of election and close identification with other county officials tend to make the county superintendency a political position. At the same time the duties and responsibilities prescribed by law tend to make it a professional office.

Each county-unit board of education is required by law to employ an attendance officer. This constitutes the minimum county superintendent's staff size. In addition, most counties employ elementary supervisors for both white and colored schools and necessary clerical and stenographic assistance. In larger counties such other staff specialists are employed as are needed to implement plans for the educational program which have been formulated by the board of education.

Each county-unit system operates a fleet of school buses. In several of the larger counties garages are operated by the board for the maintenance and repair of buses. These transportation employees are directly responsible to the county superintendent.

Responsibility for the administration of each school in the county-unit system is assigned to a principal or to a head teacher. Many administrative details are delegated to the principal or head teacher, who acts as the representative of the board in a subordinate position to the county superintendent. The extent and nature of these delegated responsibilities depend upon the administrative policies adopted in each county. In well-administered school systems the county superintendent and principals handle such administrative details as recommending teachers and other personnel for employment, supervising public use of school plants, purchasing supplies, and managing situations requiring substitute teachers. When such policies governing the exercise of these functions have been adopted by the board, they establish a basis for sound working relationships between the county superintendent's office and personnel in the local community schools. Policies of a comparable nature are essential in all school systems, but because of distance between schools and the tendency for each community to function as a separate entity, carefully formulated administrative policies are especially important in county-unit districts.

Each of the thirty-four independent administrative units in Georgia

is legally separate from the county unit. Each elects a board, chooses a superintendent, and plans a budget. If at any time a majority of the citizens in an independent district should vote to disorganize their school district and join the county unit, the county-unit district must accept them. Independent districts and county units frequently enter into contractual arrangements for the transportation of children, for instructional services, for joint employment of specialized personnel, and sometimes for joint construction and operation of a school plant. But each constitutes a distinct and separate administrative unit. County units and independent districts have comparable relationships to the state department of education and to the local communities they serve.

ALABAMA

In Alabama there are two types of local administrative units—county school districts and independent city school districts. Each of the sixty-seven counties in the state constitutes a county unit of school administration which includes all territory in the county that is not a part of an independent district. Cities having a population of 2500 or more may be organized as independent school districts. There are forty-one independent city school districts in the state. In thirty-seven counties there are no independent districts. These counties are complete county units of school administration. In thirty counties one or more cities are organized as independent administrative units.

It is difficult to conceive of more satisfactory legal provisions for the merger of county and city school districts into single administrative units than are made in the Alabama school laws. Such a merger may be effected by resolutions adopted by the county board of education and the board of education of the independent city school district involved. Following the adoption of such resolutions the merger becomes effective within thirty days unless 25 percent of the qualified voters in the area affected by the merger file a written protest with the boards of education. In case such protests are made, the proposal for the merger must be submitted to a vote of the people and can be authorized only by a favorable majority vote.

Many of the independent districts are too small to provide comprehensive educational programs at reasonable cost. The American

Council on Education⁹ in its survey of public education in 1945 pointed out that thirty of the independent school districts in the state had total enrollments of fewer than 1600 white pupils. Maintenance of a dual school system—separate schools for white and colored children—adds to the administrative difficulties of small school systems. Library service, lunchroom facilities, and instruction in music, art, and vocational education are costly and difficult to maintain in school systems with small enrollments. Merger of these small districts with county units of school administration would undoubtedly lead to economy and efficiency in administration and to a wider range of educational opportunities for the children enrolled in the schools.

The legislation enacted in 1915 which established the county unit of school administration in Alabama provided for the appointment of the county superintendent by the county board of education. For several years all county superintendents in the state were appointed under the provisions of this general law. But in recent years the practice of enacting special laws, applicable to a particular county, making the county superintendent an elective officer has developed. So many of these special laws have been enacted that by 1945 forty-seven of the sixty-seven counties in the state elected the county superintendent by popular vote.¹⁰

The Alabama county-unit board of education consists of five members elected at large for six-year overlapping terms. Most students of school administration look with favor on the practice of electing board members that represent the county school district at large rather than a particular ward or section. Perhaps because of the newness of the county as a local unit of school administration, the practice has not been widely accepted. Rural people seem to have fallen short of full acceptance of the county as a completely integrated, single school district. They have feared the domination of larger centers of population and have sought to maintain direct identifiable lines of relationship between the communities in which the schools are located and the overall county-unit board.

⁹ American Council on Education, *Public Education in Alabama*, a Report of the Alabama Educational Survey Commission, the Council, Washington, D.C., 1945, p. 225.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

As a result of this feeling, legislation establishing county-unit districts in most states has made some kind of provision to ensure distribution of board representation. Alabama is one of the exceptions.

Prior to the establishment of the county unit in Alabama, there was a board of school trustees elected in each township. These boards had major responsibilities for the administration of all schools in the township. Under the county unit, all administrative responsibilities were transferred to the county boards and the township boards of trustees were eliminated. Perhaps as a carry-over from the familiar pattern of school administration, provisions were made in the county-unit law for advisory trustees in each attendance area. The patrons of each school nominate six persons from whom the county board of education appoints a three-member board of trustees. The trustees supervise the public use of school buildings. They have no power to nominate teachers but may, by unanimous consent, refuse to accept teachers who have been assigned to their school by the county superintendent.

Powers of Alabama county boards of education are broad and general. They are directed to maintain a uniform and effective system of public education throughout their respective counties. They determine where schools shall be established, how schools shall be equipped, and what services shall be provided. They are authorized to enter into contractual agreements with other districts for joint construction and operation of schools. They employ personnel, fix salary schedules, and determine the general policy under which the schools are operated. They are empowered to consolidate schools and provide pupil transportation.

The right of county boards of education to purchase and operate the kinds and number of buses needed to transport children to and from school has been established by law and upheld by court ruling. All county-unit districts operate fleets of school buses. In most instances, the equipment is owned by the board. County supervisors of transportation, who are responsible for the administration of transportation, are members of county superintendents' staffs.

The county boards of education and the county superintendent are generally independent of other county governmental agencies. Their relationship to the state government is direct. Their position as gov-

ernmental units is being strengthened from year to year through the performance of additional functions. There is no tendency to transfer functions to the court of county commissioners or other county governing bodies. For all practical purposes, the Alabama county school district is a self-governing administrative unit.

TENNESSEE

There are 150 basic units of school administration in Tennessee. Each of the ninety-five counties in the state is a unit of school administration that includes all territory in the county not included in city and special districts. There are fifty-five city and special districts which are independent of county control.

Towns and cities established by charters granted by the state legislature usually constitute independent districts. Special districts are administrative units that have been created by special acts of the legislature. In many instances, special districts have been created for the sole purpose of raising funds to construct school buildings; such special tax districts do not constitute administrative units but are integral parts of the county units in which they are located. The operating cost of such schools is a part of the county school district budget and the school is administered by the county board of education through the county superintendent. In other instances, special school districts are autonomously independent administrative units.

The county unit of administration is fiscally dependent on the politically elected county governing body. The budget of the county board of education must be approved by the county court. Tax levies for educational purposes that are recommended by the county board of education are made by the county court.

There is no one pattern of administrative relationship between the county court and the county board of education. The general school law provides for the appointment of a seven-member county board of education by the county court, each member to serve for a term of seven years. Special acts of the legislature over a period of years, each applicable to a particular county, have provided for popular elected boards of education in forty-six of the ninety-five counties in the state. The county superintendent of schools is elected by the people in fifty-

three counties. In other counties he is appointed by the county court. The state constitution specifically states that no county office created by the state legislature shall be filled otherwise than by election by the people or appointment by the county court. This provision prohibits the appointment of the county superintendent by the county board of education.

The county court fixes the compensation of county board members. The amount of compensation varies among the different counties in the state. In a particular county, for which specific information is available, the rate of compensation for each board member is \$10 per meeting, not to exceed fifty-two meetings per year.¹¹

In the Tennessee county unit of school administration, the county superintendent is responsible to the board of education for all phases of the educational program. School personnel are employed only upon the recommendation of the county superintendent. In most counties an assistant superintendent directly responsible to the county superintendent is in charge of business affairs. The superintendent and members of his staff provide leadership in curriculum building and instructional improvement for all schools in the county. Providing pupil transportation wherever needed in the county school system is a responsibility of the county board of education which is delegated to the superintendent.

The population and geographic area of counties vary so widely that it is difficult to point to a particular county, but data from one of the more populous counties in the central part of the state give some indication of the size of these county school systems. There were 670 teachers employed in the elementary and secondary schools in the Davidson County Unit School District in 1948-1949. The administrative and supervisory personnel in this school system included the superintendent, twenty-four nonteaching elementary principals, six nonteaching high school principals, five supervisors of instruction, and forty-eight other persons who had some administrative and supervisory responsibilities. The nonprofessional personnel included twenty-one

¹¹ John E. Brewton and others, *Public Schools of Davidson County, Tennessee*, a Survey Report, Division of Surveys and Field Services, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, 1949, p. 8.

secretaries and clerks, sixty-two maintenance workers, sixty-two janitors and engineers, forty-seven school bus drivers, and three unclassified personnel. Altogether, there were 907 persons employed on a full-time basis, working under the general direction of the county board of education in the operation of the schools in this administrative unit. Many county-unit districts are smaller than the Davidson County School District, but in many instances county-unit school systems are larger. In most cases, they are large enough to operate comprehensive educational programs.

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF COUNTY UNITS

In the twelve county-unit states there are 904 county units of school administration and 441 independent districts. The number of independent districts in each of these states ranges from none in Florida and West Virginia to 136 in Kentucky. All county units have the common characteristic of being comprised of a large geographic area which is made up of a number of neighborhoods and communities. In contrast, independent districts are composed of a small, much more densely populated area usually consisting of a single city or village community. Except for the few large city school systems, county units of administration in these states have much larger pupil populations than the independent districts.

Responsibility for general administrative control in all county units is placed on a county board of education. County boards usually consist of five or seven members, but there is no uniformity in the method of selecting them. In half of the county-unit states, county boards of education are appointed. Appointment is made by the governor in Maryland, by the grand jury in Georgia, by the legislative assembly in North Carolina, by the county court in Tennessee, and by special committees established by law for the purposes of appointing school board members in Virginia and New Mexico.

In the remaining six county-unit states, members of the county board of education are elected by popular vote, but there is no uniformity in methods of election. In West Virginia board members are elected by a countywide popular vote at a general election, but on a nonpartisan ballot. In an effort to ensure fair distribution of board

representation, the provision is made that not more than two members of the board can be chosen from one magisterial district.

The county unit in Florida is divided into school board election districts. One school board member is elected from each district on a political ballot by countywide vote at a general election. Comparable practices for dividing the county unit into districts are followed in Utah and Louisiana. In Alabama board members are elected as representatives of the county-unit district at large on a political ballot at a general election.

In seven county-unit states—Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, North Carolina, Utah, Virginia, and West Virginia—the county superintendent of schools is appointed by the county board. In Alabama superintendents are appointed by the board in some counties and elected by popular vote in others. The general school law in Tennessee provides for the appointment of the county superintendent by the county court, but special legislation has made the position an elective one in about half the counties in the state. In New Mexico, Georgia, and Florida all county superintendents are elected by popular vote.

There are some distinguishing characteristics common to county units of school administration in all states:

1. The county unit is centrally controlled by a single representative lay board. There are no subordinate boards within its limits that have general administrative power.
2. The board operates through a superintendent who is the chief educational officer in the county-unit district.
3. There is but one general school budget in the county unit.
4. Educational programs are maintained that extend through both elementary and secondary grades.
5. Administrative authorities of the county unit are directly responsible to the people in the local communities for the operation of the schools.
6. Lines of communication between the county-unit district and the state department of education are direct. There is no intermediate administrative organization.
7. There are a number of local attendance areas within each county-unit district.
8. The boundaries of the county-unit district coincide with or are approximately the same as the boundaries of the civil county.

PROBLEMS PECULIAR TO COUNTY UNITS

SCHOOL BOARD UNITY

There is no more important factor in the operation of any administrative unit, whether it be a small common school district that operates but a single one-teacher school, a large metropolitan school system, or a county unit, than the board of education. The school board is the center of educational control—the nucleus from which educational policy radiates outward—influencing and shaping the character of every segment of the educational program. It represents the local community and translates the interests and desires of the people into a functioning educational program. At the same time it exercises leadership which gives character and direction to the community educational program and leads to its improvement.

Honest differences of opinion among board members are healthy. Divergent viewpoints are seed beds for experimentation and growth. But it is essential that the board constitute a closely knit working unit. The educational program for which the board is responsible should be viewed in its entirety. Every member of the board must have just as keen a sense of responsibility for the school in the most remote, isolated part of the district as he does for the schools in the local neighborhood in which he lives.

Creating and sustaining unity in the board of educational is one of the most important problems faced by county units of school administration. The county unit is an overall secondary type of community based on the relationships involved in providing the governmental services needed by rural people. Undoubtedly, many county units are gradually emerging into large primary communities, but the instances are rare in which the transition has been complete. Most county units are composed of several well-defined primary communities in which the people are personally acquainted with each other, work together, and maintain institutions and service agencies that meet many of their social and economic needs.

Individual board members live in these primary communities and tend to feel a special sense of responsibility for their educational interests. Furthermore, the people in the local community look upon the

particular board member who lives in their town as their representative on the school board. Such grass-roots relationships are effective channels for keeping the board in touch with community educational problems, but when such interests assume primacy over the total educational program, the board no longer has the unity of purpose necessary for effective work.

The leadership of the county superintendent is the most important factor in maintaining board unity. He works to this end by keeping board members well acquainted with the educational needs and resources in every part of the administrative unit and with the various aspects of the educational program that is in operation.

In forty-four states there are active state school-board associations. Through formal and informal programs of research, publications, and conventions, these organizations aid board members in getting clearer visions of their duties and responsibilities and fuller appreciation of their roles in public education. State departments of education have helped to clarify the functions of school boards and to establish sound working procedures through regional conferences for board members. Such conferences give board members from different school districts an opportunity to exchange ideas, to give group consideration to broad educational problems, and to become acquainted with educational trends and developments.

SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

In about one-third of the county-unit districts, one or more sections of the county are organized as special school districts. Special districts usually include villages, towns, and cities that are strategically located for the development of community schools. The people in the rural area immediately surrounding the special school district work in village industries and business places, shop in village stores, seek recreation in village amusement places, and worship in village churches. In many instances, the highways that serve the rural areas radiate from the village center like spokes from the hub of a wheel; yet, because of an artificial district boundary line, schools for children in the rural areas cannot be maintained in the village center. In many instances, school buses travel through the village center, past the village school, to

transport children several miles out into the country to a school maintained by the county unit. Frequently, the enrollment in neither the village school nor the school in the open country is large enough to permit the maintenance of a good educational program. The continued operation of small school districts, and in many instances of larger city systems, independent of the county unit in which they are located prevents sound comprehensive planning and imposes unnecessary hardships and restrictions on both pupils and patrons. The special interests which have resulted in the creation and continued operation of special school districts to the detriment of the educational interests of children have no rightful place in sound school district organization.

BOUNDARY-LINE COMMUNITIES

The county is not a natural sociological unit. In many instances, communities and neighborhoods of people live so near the boundary lines of counties that they can be served best by schools in the adjoining school districts. Such conditions have been recognized in many county-unit laws by provisions for the operation of joint district schools and for the payment of the tuition charges for children who attend school in a neighboring school district. These provisions are helpful, but far too often they are used only in emergency situations. Furthermore, one important part of the problem remains unsolved even after such joint and contractual arrangements between neighboring districts have been made. Parents and other adult citizens in boundary-line communities are seldom vigorous supporters of a school system that does not directly serve them.

LOCAL LAY PARTICIPATION

One of the commonly accepted criteria for a satisfactory unit of local school administration is that it be an area in which lay citizens feel a keen sense of responsibility for the educational program.¹² County units are frequently criticized for failing to meet this criteria. It is pointed out that control of the schools has been removed so far

¹² Julian E. Butterworth and others, *Improving Educational Opportunities in Rural Areas*, University of the State of New York, State Education Department, Albany, August 1, 1946, Bulletin 1322, p. 85.

from the people that they are no longer much concerned about it—that people in the local neighborhoods and communities do not participate effectively in educational planning and in deciding educational issues.

Undoubtedly, there are many situations in which such criticisms are well grounded. County units are large and are usually composed of a number of communities and neighborhoods. The practice of presenting the budget to all the people in the district in a single mass meeting, which is commonly followed in smaller community districts, is impractical. The administrative staff of the county school system cannot be well acquainted with the ebb and flow of public opinion in the local communities without special effort. Under such conditions, there is the constant danger that school administration will become cold and mechanical—that it will be divorced from the warm, lively interest and support of community groups.

But there are many county units in which lay participation in educational planning has been so outstanding that it has claimed nationwide attention. It was largely through the efforts of lay citizens in Arlington County, Virginia, that special legislation was enacted which changed the plan of selecting school board members from an appointive to an elective method; that summer classes were established; that a bond issue was authorized which permitted improvement in school plant facilities throughout the unit; that teacher loads were reduced; that teachers' salaries were raised; and that a new superintendent who could give leadership to a forward-looking educational program was employed.¹³

In Millard County, Utah, parents, teachers, school board members, and members of the superintendent's office meet together in work conferences to plan the county educational program. Results of these conferences are readily observed in the instructional program. For example, the report of a lay citizens' group on the accomplishments of a countywide workshop for parents and teachers that had been held the previous year pointed to such results as fifty teachers on a single day on the high watersheds, along the open ditches, and in the cultivated fields studying practical problems of irrigation and of conserving

¹³ March of Time Forum Films, *The Fight for Better Schools*, New York, 1950.

water supply with farmers from the school districts as their instructors; a group of veterans' wives in the homemaking laboratory of the high school making new Easter bonnets under the direction of the home-making teacher while their husbands work with agricultural problems in the farm shop; county road employees, working with the principal, teachers, and larger boys of an elementary school, grading and surfacing a playground; a religious education and recreation program, developing through the close coöperation of the church and school, that is reaching 80 percent of the youth in the school district in an effective manner.¹⁴

Comparable programs of school-community relationships with equally satisfactory results can be observed in many county units of school administration.

In county units where lay citizens take little or no interest in the educational program and where the schools seem to be almost completely divorced from community life, the fault is more likely to be in the type of educational leadership that is provided than in the particular character of the administrative organization. Good programs of school-community relationship do not just happen. They result from careful planning and sustained effort. Far too many superintendents give little or no attention to school public relations except in times of emergency. Then, their belated efforts take the form of a shock treatment to aid the schools in getting over a high hurdle or of soothing to ease the pain of wounded spirits.

LIGHTHOUSE SCHOOLS

Equalization of educational opportunity in rural areas is one of the most distinctive advantages of county units of school administration. Unfortunately, as equalization has taken place, it has not always brought the level of the educational program in the educationally underprivileged sections of the county up to the level of the programs in the stronger school districts. It has been a leveling-off process which has shifted some of the resources from wealthier sections of the unit to the less wealthy. Before reorganization many small wealthy units

¹⁴ Shirley Cooper, "More Than Day Dreaming," *NEA Journal*, February 1949, pp. 117-118.

maintained superior programs which served as beacon lights to point the way to educational improvement.

Under well-formulated financial plans for equalizing the cost of a foundation program, the leadership of lighthouse districts has been invaluable. But too frequently special districts have been formed without regard for the educational interest of children living in areas of the county with low assessed valuation. Boundary lines have been drawn to include as much wealth and as few children as possible. Under such conditions, the lighthouse schools have had but little positive effect on the educational programs in neighboring units. Weaker districts with insufficient resources for maintaining the bare minimum essentials of an educational program have not been able to make many of the adaptations suggested by the lighthouse schools.

The influence of special school districts on public education in West Virginia brought the following protest from one of the earliest state superintendents of public instruction.

If every populous and wealthy neighborhood in this state should be erected into an independent school district, the sparsely populated and less wealthy would be unable to sustain the schools for the minimum term prescribed by law. Our system is based upon the theory that it is right, morally, socially, politically and religiously, to require the affluent to assist in the education of the children of the less opulent around them. . . . The indiscriminate formation of these independent school districts tends to localize the system by giving to wealthy neighborhoods the exclusive control of their own school funds and schools regardless of the wants and necessities of the other, and often less favored parts of the townships from which they are taken.¹⁵

The county unit of school administration has gone a long way toward the solution of this problem; but at the same time it has had a tendency to prevent the development of lighthouse programs. In analyzing this problem, the West Virginia state school survey staff of 1945 recommended that school finance laws be modified so that neighborhoods and communities constituting attendance areas would

¹⁵ C. S. Lewis, *Eighth Annual Report of the General Superintendent of Public Schools of the State of West Virginia*, 1872, State Education Department, Charleston, 1872, pp. 38-39.

be permitted to vote additional tax levies to raise their educational programs above the level of the program maintained by the county school district budget.¹⁶ Such practice would make the attendance area a special tax district for current expense purposes.

There are factors other than finance, however, involved in the development of outstanding instructional programs. Local community attitudes toward the school, quality of instruction, and willingness to experiment are indispensable factors in stimulating educational growth and improvement. In many county units special schools are designated by the county supervisory staff as experimental schools. At regular intervals, teachers from the surrounding area come together at the experimental school to observe practices and to discuss various aspects of the program. The county unit is especially well adapted to developing this type of lighthouse school. *School at Centreville*, a moving picture made by the Department of Rural Education of the National Education Association to illustrate good instructional practices in rural schools, was made in an elementary neighborhood school in Fairfax County, Virginia. This superior school is a part of the Fairfax County school system and has no financial resources other than an amount equal to all comparable schools in the county-unit district.

ADVANTAGES OF THE COUNTY UNIT

County units of school administration create conditions more favorable for the equalization of educational opportunity, effective use of educational resources, and improvements in the quality of the educational program in rural areas than are commonly possible in small independent school districts.

EQUALIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

The county unit establishes conditions which more nearly equalize educational opportunities. This is accomplished through

1. Pooling the resources of a number of small districts in one large unit and distributing the services purchased by these resources in an equal manner over the entire area.

¹⁶ George D. Strayer, *A Report of a Survey of Public Education in the State of West Virginia*, Digest of the Report, Legislative Interim Committee, Charleston, 1945, pp. 93-107.

2. Providing a school term of equal length in all schools in the unit.
3. Developing a program of pupil transportation and a system of secondary schools which gives every child in the county district a chance for a high school education.
4. Placing a premium on high-level educational preparation of teachers and on teaching competencies.
5. Maintaining a single salary schedule and putting the employment and placement of teachers on a professional basis.
6. Raising the quality of educational leadership in the county by centralizing administrative authority and control at one point.
7. Making possible better utilization of school plants through the elimination of many small schools in a long-range program of consolidation.

EFFECTIVE USE OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

County units of school administration are well adapted to making efficient and economical use of educational resources through

1. Maintaining closer supervision over planning and administering the educational budget.
2. Eliminating needless duplication of effort caused by poorly planned bus routes, inadequate supervision of maintenance and custodial service, and unnecessary operation of small classes.
3. Distributing the services of such specialized professional personnel as health nurses, school physicians, supervisors of instruction, and visiting teachers over a large school population.
4. Centralizing purchasing of school supplies and equipment with improved methods of accounting.
5. Increasing the efficiency of teachers, custodians, bus drivers, and maintenance personnel through in-service education programs.

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CHAPTER VII

Educational Leadership Through the County Superintendent's Office

Prestige, wage rates, salary schedules, favorable living conditions, opportunities for occupational employment and advancement, and countless inventions, machines, and gadgets that add to the comforts and conveniences of living are operating forces that continuously drain capable educational leadership from rural areas into larger centers of population. General observation in almost any rural community reveals that it is the youth—the better educated—the people with the greatest productive powers and creative energies who migrate to cities in the greatest numbers. To compensate for this loss—to keep people in responsible positions in rural communities with the initiative and vision needed to give constructive leadership to the changing educational program—is an urgent problem in rural American life. The county superintendent's office is one of the most promising approaches to the solution of this problem.

COMMUNITY CONTROL OF EDUCATION

The schools are the people's—everybody's—laborer and capitalist, farmer and industrialist, young and old, rich and poor; all enjoy their benefits, contribute to their support, and share the responsibility of keeping them vitally alive and alert to the needs of children, youth, and adults. Through their boards of education and their county and state governments they levy and collect taxes, construct and equip

buildings, select and employ teachers, and determine the general character and content of the instructional program. In one community classrooms are clean, orderly, and attractive; equipment is up to date; instructional supplies are adequate; lawns and shrubbery are well kept; and the morale of pupils and teachers is high. In another equally wealthy community in the same state, classroom walls are dingy, floors are oily, toilets are smelly, and teachers and pupils devote more effort to seeking ways to escape from their unpleasant surroundings than they do to constructive work. The difference between the schools in these two communities is due to the will of the people. Schools are about what the people want them to be.

THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE

The will of the people is the force that controls the schools. This force may be exerted through regularly organized channels of government, by waves of public opinion, or manifested by lethargy and indifference. It may take the form of pressures from special-interest groups, skillful manipulations of political parties, seeping influences of small but powerful minorities that would make the schools agencies of propaganda for special interests, or well-organized, constructive, long-range planning of citizens' committees which are earnestly seeking to strengthen the school as a public institution. What the schools are and what the schools do are determined by the temper, the attitude, and the will of the people. "The educational advantages provided for children seldom exceed the desires of a majority of the people in the community."¹

In the simple rural community of early American life in which the concept of local control of public education is so firmly rooted, the educational interests, attitudes, and desires of people were brought to a focal point in the town meeting or school district meeting. It was in these folk assemblies, which frequently were attended by a majority or even by all the people in the school community, that educational issues were considered, policies were formed, and action was taken.

¹ Shirley Cooper (ed.), *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, Yearbook of the NEA Department of Rural Education, the Department, Washington, D.C., 1950, p. 14.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Securing common consensus which will result in concerted community action on educational problems is no longer a simple process. In many rural school districts, it is impractical and almost impossible for a majority of the people to attend a single school meeting. Furthermore, the rural community has become a constellation of organized special-interest groups. Farm organizations, 4-H Clubs, homemakers' clubs, coöperative associations, milk producers' associations, spray rings, horticultural societies, sportsmen's leagues, luncheon clubs, parent-teacher associations, church organizations, and recreation clubs are but a few of the general types of organizations commonly found in rural communities. There may be fifty or more in a single rural community. Kolb and Wileden identified 351 formally organized special-interest groups in five southern Wisconsin counties.²

Not infrequently, local organizations secure added strength and prestige through affiliation with national organizations. Over 200 national organizations have been identified which seek to influence some phase of the educational program at the local community level. It is in the action of these special-interest groups that educational interest and desires are crystallized and that educational ideals are formulated. It is through the efforts of these organizations that the course of a community educational program is charted.

THE DYNAMICS OF COMMUNITY LIFE

In a small rural community representatives of four different groups appeared at an open meeting of the board of education. A young mothers' club urged the board to add suitable units to the school plant and establish kindergarten classes. A youth group with recreational interests requested the board to employ a recreation leader and to make the gymnasium and playgrounds available for community use during the summer months. A church organization expressed concern over the emphasis being given to "fads and frills" in the educational program and urged the board to limit its efforts to instruction in the fundamentals. A taxpayers' league vigorously opposed any increase in

² J. H. Kolb and Edmund deS. Brunner, *A Study of Rural Society*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1946, p. 332.

the education budget and urged that the present level of expenditures be reduced.

The activities of these groups did not end with the formal expression of their interests to the board of education. They continued to be effective and to build up community pressures as their interests were expressed on the editorial page of the town's weekly newspaper, as they were discussed in public addresses, and as they were relayed and amplified in the numerous informal groups and cliques that formed on street corners, near shopping centers, at auction sales, and over backyard fences. Within these gossipy groups, viewpoints were aired, information was exchanged and frequently distorted, and ideas of changes that ought to be made in the community's school gradually took shape.

This simple situation illustrates the process through which rural people shape educational ideas and move into community action. Inherent in these processes are the dynamics of community life. Conflicting purposes of different groups and divergent opinions of different individuals create community pressures. The superintendent and the board of education not infrequently find themselves as the focal point of these forces. How to deal with them constructively, how to direct these energies into useful channels, demands capable, farsighted educational leadership. The success of any school administrator depends largely on his skill in dealing with the forces of community action. His responsibilities are no longer limited to the management of a school system in a community. Rather, he is the chief educational leader for the entire community—the chief spokesman for education. Every facet of community life that is related to the educational interests and needs of children is his concern.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Educational leadership cannot be considered apart from the desires, interests, and needs of the people it serves and from the social and governmental framework within which they live and work together. It is not a "hallowed entity" that can be placed on a pedestal above and apart from the people it serves. It is a closely knit part of the ongoing social process. The feeling of people, their cultural backgrounds, the social values that guide their lives, and the problems they face are the

source of its vitality. It has been observed repeatedly that the most successful leaders in the history of civilization have been those who have discovered what people wanted and have helped them move toward securing it.

Education is a great common community enterprise. It is the combined effort of people to rise to a higher plane of living, materially and spiritually, than they have known in the past. It is a kind of voyage on an uncharted sea guided by a hope for something better than they now have. It is beset by deep-seated prejudices and intolerance, by jealousy and pettiness, and by ignorance and poverty. It receives stability and guidance from the past, strives to deal realistically with the present, and builds for the future.

Through a thousand facets the school reaches out and touches intimate and vital aspects of individual and community life—the health of children, their status among their associates, their competencies—the values that govern the behavior of youth, their outlook on life, the vocations they will follow—the character of family life, the income of the community, the use of resources.

It is to assist them in dealing with practical everyday problems of living that people have established schools and seek to modify them from time to time to meet changing conditions and new needs. When they have been resistant to needed changes, tardy in making needed improvements, or have dissipated their energies in struggling over petty issues, it is because they have not fully comprehended the scope and purposes of the educational program or because of conflict in the values which guide their daily action. Life is a continuous process of making choices—of balancing one alternative against another and following the course which seems to be most satisfactory or most promising. At any given moment people make the best choices they are capable of making. If poor decisions are made, it is because they lack vision and understanding. It is a function of leadership to help people develop a breadth of understanding so that intelligent decisions will be made.

Schools that people want are schools that will help them most in successfully meeting difficult situations. Such schools grow out of community life. They reflect the values and traditions of the cultural

background of the community as well as the resources and needs of the people. They become stronger through service. Just as the rough surface of a stone shapes a blade and creates a keener cutting edge, so is community education improved and made stronger as it successfully meets the rough challenges extended to it. There is no more important problem before school administrators today than that of developing the understandings and perfecting the skills needed to help people build the schools they want and need.

Democratic educational leadership is a kind of stimulation resulting from mutual relationships between two or more persons that releases energies and initiates action along lines of common interest. It is a pluralistic entity rather than the functioning of a single individual. It recognizes a wide range of skills, interests, and drives and "brings together in a common effort contributions born out of the special abilities and unique experiences of many people."³

It was during a campaign for a school bond election that the county superintendent of an Appalachian Mountain county became familiar, for the first time, with the broad and varied aspects of leadership in a small mining community in his county. When he visited the village to confer with the leaders about the proposed school bond, he was invited to a luncheon meeting of the Kiwanis Club. Here he met the town's three ministers, the druggist, the postmaster, the bank president, the mine superintendent, the managers of three grocery stores, a hardware merchant, the high school principal, a restaurant operator, the foreman of the railroad shops, the mayor and two councilmen, an undertaker, and the manager of the local moving picture theater. That evening, when he met with the local Chamber of Commerce, the same persons were in the group. The next morning, at a meeting of the Women's Club, he was introduced to the wives of the men he had met in the two previous meetings.

The superintendent clearly recognized that these were leading families in the community. They were financially secure, enjoyed a favored social position, and were well informed. They regarded themselves as community leaders. But they represented only a small percentage of

³ American Association of School Administrators, *Community Leadership*, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1950, p. 9.

the population. There were the miners, trackmen, electricians, shop men, mechanics, carpenters, and day laborers. They and their families made up four-fifths of the village population. Most of the children enrolled in the school came from their homes. Surely they were concerned about a proposal for improving the school plant. Would they follow the lead of the white-collar folks? Were there no leaders in these groups?

As the superintendent moved about the community, he discovered that leadership and interest in the school bond election were not limited to any single occupational or status group. The public relations committee of the miners' union, local was already busy gathering factual information concerning school building needs, assessed valuation, and levy rates; the fire company had inspected the school plant for accidents and fire hazards and was ready to publicize the information; many folks were counseling with Patsy, the shoe cobbler on Front Street, who was also leader of the town band; and Long Joe, the proprietor of the town's only barber shop, was missing no opportunities to discuss the school bond election.

HORIZONTAL LEADERSHIP

In almost every rural community, leadership tends to originate in and vitally affect people at fairly well-defined social levels. For example, the Women's Club, Rotary, Lions, Chamber of Commerce, and Masonic Order tend to include people from the higher income brackets and the more secure social positions in the community. It is usually the owner and operator of the large farm who is most active in farm organizations. The Boy Scouts and 4-H Club include children from wealthier homes much more frequently than children from farm laborers' or sharecroppers' homes.

In luncheon and literary clubs recognition is associated with verbal skills, breadth of understanding, and social graces. The man who can make a good speech, who can converse easily and fluently with his neighbors, and who is well informed on social, business, and governmental issues commands the respect and admiration of his associates. These accomplishments are given a high value in this type of organization and leadership is bestowed upon the most competent persons in

the group. But when the purpose of the organization shifts to specific fields of interest, persons particularly well qualified in these fields are placed in leadership roles. It is the optometrist in the club who is the leader when efforts are directed to providing glasses for underprivileged children in the community. And members of the group naturally turn to the engineer for counsel when a new road project is under consideration. The person with the greatest ability in the field of interest that claims the attention of the group at any given time tends to become the leader.

The activities and purposes of the volunteer fire company attract people with skills and interests that differ widely from the attributes given primacy in the social or literary club. Knowledge of gas pressures, combustion, location of water lines, and building construction; and skills in placing and mounting ladders, handling mechanical equipment, and technique of rescue work are valued highly in this organization. The most accomplished persons become leaders of the group. In one small community, John Scott, the district attorney, was president of the Kiwanis Club. His ability as a public speaker and acquaintance with many types of community problems made him one of the strongest leaders in this group. He was also a member of the volunteer fire department. But in this group, he was not regarded as a leader. The special skills and competencies which he possessed were not called for so frequently in this organization.

During the early months of World War II, a group of high school teachers in a mining community attended a first-aid class taught by a functionally illiterate coal loader. Through his experiences as a member of a mine rescue squad, he had become highly skilled in the techniques of first aid. In this hour of need, there was a demand for the competencies he possessed and he became leader of a group of people, in a teaching-learning situation, who had had far superior educational advantages and enjoyed much higher social prestige than he.

There are different segments, levels, or strata of community life. Sociologists frequently make the classification of upper, middle, and lower levels. Sometimes, further classifications are made which identify and characterize five or more social levels. Leadership arising in any segment of community life tends to affect and reflect the interests of

the people at the level at which it originates. The school superintendent who fails to secure participation of leadership from every level is not bringing the complete resources of the community to bear on shaping the educational program and faces the danger of having the program become top-heavy or lopsided.

VERTICAL LEADERSHIP

In almost every rural community there is leadership which is secure enough and is sufficiently far-reaching to reflect the interests of people at every level and in every segment of community life. The country doctor, the postmaster, the minister, the druggist, the publisher of the weekly newspaper, a respected politician, or a substantial farmer frequently enjoys such a position. The following example illustrates this type of community leadership.

At a college of agriculture faculty meeting which I attended, a special committee submitted the names of ten farmers who were to be given recognition by the university for their special contributions to agriculture. Ed Malcheski, a dairy farmer who lived at Pulaski, was one of these leaders. Fortunately, within a month or two an opportunity came for me to visit Pulaski under conditions which permitted my spending an entire day talking with people in the community, observing industrial plants and business places, and getting acquainted with the institutions which served the people living in the village and on the surrounding dairy farms. One of the most pleasant and most profitable events of the day was a luncheon in the school building at which I had the privilege of sitting between Father Salm, a prominent rural-life leader in this area, and Ed Malcheski.

Before I had half finished the attractive and tasty salad served by the high school homemaking girls, I had decided the luncheon was a real treat. A casual glance around the table revealed that the other guests concurred with my opinion and were expressing their feelings in a very realistic manner. But Malcheski's food remained on his plate almost untouched long after our plates had been removed and we had disposed of a generous piece of apple pie and a second cup of coffee. We had eaten while he had talked—talked almost incessantly of rural people, their children, their schools, their farms, their incomes, their

institutions. During this brief period, I had begun to understand, in part at least, why Ed Malcheski was a farm leader. He was deeply and sincerely interested and concerned with the problems of rural life in his own community. From his daily contact and experiences with his neighbors at work on their farms and in their little business places he was able to abstract the principles basic to the ongoing processes of rural American life.

There was a genuine earthiness in his mannerisms, in his speech, and in his thinking which would cause him to be recognized as a farmer in almost any group of people. His clothing was the kind the busy farmer wears when he makes a hasty trip to the village to attend a meeting of the board of directors of the local bank or coöp. The roughness of his hands showed that milking a herd of cows, cleaning a barn, or repairing a piece of farm equipment was more than a pastoral vision to him. He had just returned from a mission to Poland, where he had been sent by the United States Government to assist farmers in this war-devastated country in getting back into production again, but his interesting travels abroad had not made him lose sight of the farm problems in his own community. Butterfat, milk prices, school district reorganization, and jobs for the young people from the large families in his community were the threads which carried his conversation. It was only when Father Salm asked a direct question that he referred to his trip to Poland, and then he was back again to rural life in his own community. It was unmistakably clear that he was one of the people.

It is a truism of course, but nevertheless significant, that leadership never comes into fruition except in relationship to a particular situation. The situation in which Malcheski had earned his right to be enumerated among the outstanding agricultural leaders of his state was in his home community.

The village of Pulaski is located at a point where the boundary lines of three counties converge at right angles. In many respects, it is much like the typical Midwestern agricultural community. The village, with a population of approximately 1000 people, maintains the institutions and service agencies—bank, schools, a beautiful church, ga-

rages, theater, and store—that serve the people living in the surrounding farm area.

The farms are not large—a quarter section with a herd of twenty to thirty cattle, owned and operated by an individual family, is the typical farm enterprise. Life is not easy. Winters are long and severe, lands are stony, and there is a noticeable deficiency of phosphate in the soils. Ninety percent of the people on the farms are of Polish descent and members of the Catholic Church.

About twenty years ago, when the repercussion of the Wall Street financial disaster began to be felt in rural communities, Malcheski assumed leadership in organizing a farmers' supply purchasing cooperative mainly for the purpose of giving farmers a bit of advantage in purchasing the feed, fertilizer, and farm machinery needed on their farms. In the beginning, this cooperative enterprise was small. The membership consisted of less than a half hundred farmers in the immediate community. The plant was nothing more than an abandoned storehouse on the outskirts of the village which was converted into a feed and fertilizer supply center and kept open two evenings each week.

The enterprise was initiated as a response to a genuinely felt need. These small farmers had to buy relatively large quantities of feed and fertilizer. A plan that would eliminate the middleman's cost might well make the difference to many farmers of being able to survive during a difficult period or going under with operating costs exceeding receipts. It was founded on a sound basis. It was guided by leadership genuinely concerned with service to the community rather than self-aggrandizement or personal profit.

Over a period of almost two decades, growth of the cooperative has been steady and regular. There are now about 1700 members in the cooperative and annual business transactions amount to well over a half-million dollars. The plant now consists of a large feed and fertilizer storeroom, a modern feed mill, a general hardware and farm machinery store, and a gasoline and fuel oil distributing plant. The accumulated savings from the enterprise have not all gone into the central plant. Savings returned to individual families in the form of

dividends have been a means of making herd improvements, making additions and improvement to dairy barns, and adding household conveniences to farm homes. Such purposes are the goals which have led Malcheski forward year after year.

Malcheski's leadership had extended into areas beyond his own community. He had been active in the Farm Bureau, working effectively at both state and local levels; he had been called upon frequently by the Extension Service of the College of Agriculture to aid in developing improved farm practices and demonstrating the use of farm machinery; he had advised with local groups in many parts of the state who were struggling with the problem of establishing farm coöperatives; he had been a spokesman for agriculture in the legislative assembly of his own state and in many national meetings; and as a kind of climax to his many years of leadership, he had been selected by the national government as an agricultural ambassador to a foreign country.

To what factors can Malcheski's success as a rural leader be attributed? What does he have? How does he do it? Every thoughtful person who has made reasonably close observations of his work must have pondered over these same questions. Being no different from others except, perhaps, a bit more inquisitive, I made numerous inquiries of those who have known him intimately and have worked with him in many types of situations.

It was a bit surprising at first to find that his neighbors did not regard him as a particularly important person. He was just one of them; he lived on a good farm but not extraordinary in any sense of the word; he was of Polish descent and spoke the Polish language, which was important in this area; he adhered to the religious belief held and professed by a large number of his neighbors; and he had problems confronting him every day that were similar in almost every respect to those of the people with whom he lived.

Malcheski was a practical person. To illustrate, during the last war period when farm labor and equipment were scarce, he took the initiative in organizing the farmers in the one-teacher school district in which his farm is located into a neighborhood labor-sharing group. According to the plans adopted by the group, when a farmer had com-

pleted his haying it was his responsibility to take his machinery to his neighbor's farm and help him until his work was done. Under this plan no machinery stood idle when it could be used and every man worked as long as any major job on a farm remained uncompleted. Such practical approaches to the solution of simple problems, and an almost fathomless faith in the ability of rural people to work through any difficulty that confronted them, have contributed much to Malcheski's success as a rural-life leader.

He gave willingly and unsparingly of his time and energy to assist any of his neighbors who were in difficult circumstances. During the years of the depression a Federal Land Bank organization was formed in this area, largely under the leadership of the county agent. Many of the farmers who needed this type of credit had difficulty in securing it because of existing indebtedness against their farms. To make the situation more difficult, many of them had an inadequate knowledge of the English language and were unacquainted with the business procedures involved in securing farm credit. In his efforts to assist his neighbors in making debt adjustments so that badly needed loans could be secured, Malcheski gave weeks of his time studying individual cases, analyzing financial statements, and preparing loan applications. His only compensation was the satisfaction of helping his neighbors keep their farms operating on a sound productive basis.

Principles of Rural Leadership. In this brief analysis of the activities and characteristics of an outstanding rural-life leader, these points stand out sharply:

1. This leader was more than a nominal member of the group with whom he worked. He was truly one of the people.
2. He had breadth of vision. From his daily contacts with people, he was able to identify the basic problems of community living and abstract the fundamental principles which gave them unity.
3. His efforts were exerted toward the solution of problems of vital interest at the moment to the people with whom he worked.
4. He began on a small basis and allowed time for growth.
5. His chances for disastrous failure were materially lessened by developing many small projects rather than risking everything on one large enterprise.

6. Being one of the cultural group, he gave full consideration to the cultural mores dominant in the life of the community.
7. His leadership led to action. Pressure for action is the force which leads rural people to seek assistance. Without action, interest and support quickly wane.
8. He had an almost unlimited faith in the ability of rural people to work out solutions to their own problems if given sufficient understanding and an opportunity to pool their efforts.
9. He had superior mental ability and keen social sensitivity.
10. He had no desires for personal aggrandizement or financial gain.
11. His actions were guided by the highest ideals of social life.
12. He enjoyed the confidence and respect of people at every level of social life in the community. To paraphrase Kipling, he could walk with kings and still not lose the common touch.

These principles of community leadership are as valid for a school superintendent as they are for an agricultural leader. Indeed, much of the work described in this foregoing situation is of an educational nature. It was directed toward helping people in a community grow—grow through increasing their understanding of vital issues affecting their daily lives; grow through successfully meeting practical problems confronting them; grow through perfecting their skills for working together and pooling their resources. It involved helping people build better homes, improve family life, and become better citizens. It helped people broaden their visions, establish higher goals, realize desires and ambitions, and develop strengths that they themselves only vaguely knew existed. Such are the ideals of education, whether it be with children in a classroom situation or with adults in an informal setting of community life. To initiate, nurture, and give guidance to such growth and development is the purpose of educational leadership.

TEAMWORK IN COUNTY EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Providing technical information and professional counsel for principals, teachers, school boards, and groups of laymen interested in educational problems is one of the important functions of the county superintendent's office. In larger county school systems, there may be five, ten, twenty, or even more professional people on the superin-

tendent's staff. Each is a specialist in a particular phase of school work. Audio-visual aids, elementary supervision, music, art, transportation, adult education, vocational education, attendance supervision, and school district reorganization are but a few of the common fields of specialization. In the smaller county school systems, responsibility for providing technical information and professional guidance in these and other fields of interest is frequently placed on the county superintendent.

Undoubtedly, professional and technical service is one of the components of county educational leadership. It stimulates action, lessens the chances for costly errors, and tends to give direction to the general course of educational development. But in a stricter sense, this is not a leadership function. Presumably, it provides essential information and helpful advice to an individual or a group of people that still retains the power of decision and has final responsibility for the course of action followed. In many respects, providing such services is not unlike the situation in which a pilot assists in bringing a large ocean liner to dock in the harbor. He guides the vessel through the narrow opening; but if it runs aground, the captain of the ship is still responsible.

The county superintendent of schools who fully utilizes the opportunities for educational leadership afforded by his position is more than a specialist who stands ready to be called on in times of emergency. He strives for a realistic grasp of the educational needs and resources of the entire county, synthesizes different viewpoints and opinions in broad aspects of an educational program, and continuously seeks to establish situations in which the energies and efforts of all who are interested in the schools can be used fruitfully.

Mere identity of leadership ability so that it can be turned to readily and its aid solicited in time of need is not enough. Such procedure is like calling for the plumber when the water system is "on the blink." It allows no opportunity for effective use of the vision and imagination of men and women who see the schools from different points of view; it inhibits the introduction of new ideas in educational planning; and it allows but little chance for long-range growth and development.

ENLISTING THE AID OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

The teachers and administrators in the local school districts are the most valuable source of educational leadership in the county school system; but, unfortunately, situations frequently exist in which they have an indifferent or even antagonistic attitude toward the county superintendent's office.

They have not identified themselves with the program of county educational leadership and are contributing little or nothing to it. How can their interest be attracted? How can their aid be enlisted? These are fundamental problems which the superintendent faces. The difficulty is not in the administrators and teachers themselves but in the program of county leadership. How can it be strengthened and improved?

Coöperative effort cannot long be sustained just for the sake of co-operation or because of established precedent and tradition. Neither can it be developed around issues that are of interest only to the county superintendent's office. To be worth while and to have vitality, it must be built around problems that are of genuine concern to the people involved. Such problem areas are numerous. Instruction, finance, buildings, equipment, mental health, guidance, school lunches, report cards, and retardation merely suggest general areas in which practical problems exist. The alert superintendent identifies such problems and takes the initiative in setting up situations in which teachers and administrators can work together toward their solution. To illustrate, in a county where the schools are under attack for failure to teach the three R's, the county superintendent is arranging a pupil, parent, teacher, and school board member conference to discuss and analyze this problem. There is no lack of interest in the conference. Teachers, administrators, and parents are pleased to have an opportunity to assist in clarifying the issues related to this problem. As these people work together, factual information will be compiled and analyzed, the shortcomings and accomplishments of children will be identified, and teaching procedures will be clarified and evaluated. Final solution to the problem is not likely to be accomplished in a single conference, no matter how well it is attended or managed; but to the extent that understanding has increased, progress has been made.

When the county school service fund was established in California for providing services through the county superintendent's office to supplement the educational programs in local districts, teachers and administrators were concerned. What kind of services would be provided? Would they be imposed on local districts that did not want them? Would they be related to the work already being done in the schools? Would local control of the schools be undermined? Would the attitude of personnel in the county office toward classroom teachers be sympathetic and helpful or impersonal and domineering?

The uneasiness of teachers and administrators was allayed and the program of services was put on a sound footing in San Diego County by establishing a personnel and policies commission composed of representatives of the local districts. This commission assisted in developing policy to govern the program of services and advised with the superintendent in the employment of personnel who would be attached to the county office but would actually work in the local schools. From the beginning, this was a coöperative program of the several school districts in the county rather than a county program imposed on the schools. The commission was an important factor in building an efficient staff because of its help in identifying able personnel. There was a feeling of security on the part of newly elected staff members, who knew they had been selected by the people whom they would serve.

Curriculum study has been one of the most commonly used methods of enlisting teachers in long-range programs for improvement of instruction. In one of its most effective forms, groups of teachers study the behavior patterns of children, become familiar with their family and community backgrounds, seek to identify important educational needs, and try to develop programs of learning experiences that will meet these needs. County superintendents have aided in establishing child study groups by securing the services of child psychologists and teacher-education specialists to direct the study, and by arranging schedules so that teachers can be released from classroom work to participate in the programs.

In several county school systems, curriculum service centers have been established to which teachers can come individually or in groups

to develop instructional materials. Specialists in such fields as visual aids, nature study, elementary science, shopwork, and art are on hand in the curriculum center to assist teachers and to acquaint them with source materials. In larger counties, curriculum service centers consist of conference rooms for large and small groups, workshops in science and industrial arts, a photographic laboratory, a curriculum library, a visual aids library, and a school library. In smaller counties, they are less pretentious but their purposes are comparable. They provide situations in which teachers can develop instructional materials for use in their own classrooms.

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES TO LAY CITIZENS

Frequently, lay citizens join with teachers and administrators in educational planning. In Breathitt County, Kentucky, a county improvement council includes representatives from the educational system, the churches, the Soil Conservation Service, the Agricultural Extension Service, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, and various county governmental agencies. Each year, this council meets with the teachers and school administrators in a preschool work conference to help plan and set up objectives for the school year. Some of the accomplishments to which the council points with pride are thirty active 4-H Clubs in the county, fall gardens planted and cultivated by 4-H Club members on school grounds which made substantial additions to the school lunch program, a farm field day at which demonstrations of various types of farm practices were made, a school festival sponsored by a service club, and a project for identifying the visual defects of school children and making needed corrections.

In Whitman County, Washington, students in vocational agriculture classes spend several days soon after the opening of school in the field with a surveyor from the Soil Conservation Service. During this time, the students learn how to prepare soil maps of their own farms. During the winter, farm planners from the Soil Conservation Service meet with the classes and assist the students in planning a complete program of conservation for their family farms. The following spring, students actually take part in putting different practices into effect.

This simple coöperative arrangement between the schools and the

Soil Conservation Service makes specialized instructional services available that could not be provided through the school budget, vitalizes a unit of instruction, and deals constructively with an important problem in this agricultural county. It illustrates effective utilization of capable educational leadership in the county which otherwise might have had but little effect on the public schools.

Much of the most valuable leadership exerted through county superintendents' offices is neither spectacular nor unique. It is merely dealing with practical educational problems in a common-sense fashion. In one county, arrangements have been developed between the schools and the juvenile court which provide better treatment for juvenile delinquents; in another, school people and representatives from business, industries, and communication agencies have united their efforts in developing educational broadcasting services; and in a third county, child study groups of young mothers sustained over a number of years have made splendid contributions to improvement of instruction in the elementary grades.

The most important job of the superintendent is to keep himself and members of his staff sensitive to the educational needs and issues that are of basic interest to the people they serve and to exercise sound judgment in arranging situations in which people can work together toward the solution of problems. His thinking and planning should be out in front, but not too far in front, to maintain vital contacts with the schools and with the people. He should move on his own initiative—not wait to be pushed by public pressures.

In so far as possible, the superintendent should identify difficulties in their early stages of development and initiate constructive measures before serious damage is inflicted or irreparable harm is done. The superintendent who has sat calmly by and watched a staff of capable teachers disintegrate because of inadequate salary schedules or unsatisfactory working conditions maintained by a local board has not filled his responsibilities as an educational leader either to children, the teachers, school board members, or the community. Raising his voice in protest against policies leading to such ends is not enough. His obligations are not fully met until he has initiated study groups, publicized pertinent information, and made the different factors clearly known to

every man and woman in the school district. Only then have his responsibilities been met.

DOMINANT VALUES IN COMMUNITY LIFE

Through long years of experience in supporting and controlling an educational program within the framework of community life, values have emerged and have received emphasis which are fundamental to a sound program of educational leadership.

1. Faith in education. Rural people and perhaps all people, generally speaking, have a profound faith in education. In their pattern of cultural behavior and cultural ideals, it is regarded as fundamental to the operation of democratic government, to the stability of community life, and to desirable accomplishments of individuals. They point with pride to the school as a community institution and resist any movement or trend that threatens to discontinue its operation. Personal prestige is gained through support of good schools. Even those who for some reason are in opposition to the maintenance of good community education are forced by public opinion to resort to subterfuge. While attacking public education at its most vital points, they still loudly proclaim their stand for good schools.

2. Spirit of mutual helpfulness. The spirit of neighborliness and mutual aid which was so essential to pioneer people as they joined together in clearing and plowing the land, in planting and harvesting their crops, in establishing and supporting community institutions, and in defending themselves against a common enemy still prevails. Precedent for coöperative effort is firmly established. People have confidence in themselves and believe that if given an opportunity they can work out the solution of any practical problem that confronts them.

3. Realism. Contrary to popular belief, there is but little factual information which indicates rural people are more conservative, more resistant to change, than those in other types of communities. The changes which have taken place in methods of farming and marketing, in means of communication and travel, in the number and types of household conveniences, and in processes of social participation in rural areas of America during the past half century indicate beyond

question that rural people are ready and willing to take advantage of social and technological change.

But there is a sense of realism deeply rooted in the behavior patterns of rural people. Close contact over the years with the whims and caprices of nature has taught them not to count their chickens before the eggs are hatched. Gambles with the weather, with the ravages of insects and plant diseases, and with the rise and fall of price cycles have bred in them a spirit of cautiousness. They want facts before they make a major move. They are practical. They have not purchased tractors and planted new varieties of wheat and oats merely because some informed person advised these practices. They have demanded demonstrable proof that the practices were sound—that they were superior to the procedures they had followed in the past. Then, and then only, have they been ready to act.

SUMMARY

There is no simple formula for providing good county educational leadership. Different situations demand different approaches and different problems require different means. Opportunity arises with the occasion and methods are dependent on the resources at hand. There are, however, factors common to all situations which in practice emerge into principles that serve as guides to superintendents in the exercise of this important function.

1. Good educational leadership begins where people are and moves forward. It recognizes their interests, desires, and needs and is cognizant of the customs and traditions which leave imprints on their daily lives. It makes use of the resources they have at hand and deals with the problems they face. Its strength is in the processes it uses to help people help themselves. Its success is measured in terms of their accomplishments.
2. Good county educational leadership is keenly sensitive to the desires, needs, and problems of people. Lines of communication are established and kept open to provide for free, easy, and frequent contacts with the people. Both criticism and praise directed toward the county superintendent's office are treated impersonally and objectively. The position of no person is too obscure for his interest to receive careful consider-

ation, and no person is so prominent that his opinions are not carefully weighed before action is taken.

3. Good educational leadership is a pluralistic entity rather than the functioning of a single individual. It recognizes a wide range of competencies born out of unique experiences and aptitudes and brings them together in united effort for a common purpose.
4. Good educational leadership is practical and down to earth. It deals with problems and issues of vital interest to parents, teachers, and pupils. It puts things of first interest first.
5. Good educational leadership is guided by tried and proven professional and ethical principles rather than by expediency. When necessary, it has courage to stand for its convictions, even under severe criticism and strong community pressures.
6. Good educational leadership is out in front. It is continuously pushing on the frontiers of educational progress through long-range planning, experimentation, measurement and evaluation, and research. It initiates action; it moves before it is pushed.
7. Good educational leadership does not put all of its eggs in one basket. It lessens the chance for disastrous failure and provides opportunity for participation of many people by breaking its program into many related segments.
8. Good educational leadership leads to action. It is pressure for action that causes people to seek advice and counsel from those in whom they have confidence and for whom they have respect. Without action, interest wanes and confidence vanishes. There is nothing more disconcerting or more injurious to the morale of a group of teachers or parents who have spent long, tedious hours in committee work accumulating factual information, preparing a report, and making recommendations than to have their report filed away to accumulate dust and to be forgotten.

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Every county superintendent should be thoroughly familiar with this authoritative treatment of rural social organization and community leadership.

CHAPTER VIII

Providing Essential Educational Services Through the Intermediate Administrative District

The educational needs of a community are never completely met, nor are its educational problems ever entirely solved. They remain in a fluid state of ebbs and flows, of exploration and experimentation, and of partial solutions and partial answers because the social and economic life in which the people are merged and from which educational needs arise is continuously changing. Every new invention or scientific discovery creates new demands for scientific knowledge and technical skills. There is no general trend in population growth or distribution, no major movement in labor organizations or industrial enterprise, but has educational implications for the people who live and work within the range of its influences.

Within the past half century, the use of automotive power in vehicles for travel and the construction of all-weather roads have been instrumental in bringing about phenomenal educational changes in rural areas throughout America. The one-teacher school which has long been regarded as a fundamental educational institution, uniquely adapted to rural areas, is rapidly passing out of existence. Bookmobiles that distribute reading materials from a central village library to homes in the open country and in smaller hamlets in the rural areas have become commonplace. The itinerant teacher has changed from a wandering pedagogue who stopped in rural neighborhoods to hold school for a few weeks in return for his board and room to a well-

prepared specialist who visits small schools at regular intervals to enrich their programs with instruction in health education, music, or art.

Knowledge essential to safety on the highways has become a fundamental need. And the character of much of the recreation sought by youth and adults alike has shifted from a simple type of activity in the homes and in the immediate neighborhoods to a spectator type of amusement provided on a commercial basis in larger centers of population. Automobile mechanics and driver training are claiming a place among the long-established courses of study in the high school curriculum. Pupil transportation has changed from the transfer of a few children in isolated farm homes to and from school in horse-drawn vehicles to an educational enterprise that transports more than 7 million children to and from school daily in 120,000 buses at a cost of more than \$235 million per year.

Automotive power is but one of many examples that could be cited to illustrate the influence of social, economic, and technological change on educational need and on the institutions which people develop to meet them. Rural electrification, mechanization and commercialization of farming, refrigeration, radio, child labor legislation, social security, new international relationships, and labor organizations have had educational implications of like significance.

A FUNCTIONAL PROGRAM

From a background of experience in dealing with everyday, run-of-the-mill problems of living which emerge from a community life that is undergoing social, economic, and technological change, educators and laymen alike have come to speak of *functional education*. In simply stated terms, this means an educational program that provides the skill and information needed to help people meet the ordinary problems of living successfully whether they be related to health, jobs, income, family life, politics, or social behavior. It helps the individual become a more capable and effective citizen and makes the community a better place in which to live.

Maintaining a functional educational program is extremely difficult for the small district. The diverse interests and varying capabilities of

people in any community call for a wide range of learning experiences. Much technical information and many specialized skills are needed by those who provide instruction. The methods of group instruction which have long been used successfully in programs of "common learnings" become less satisfactory with increased specialization in the curriculum. In smaller school systems, classes are typically small and in striving to provide instruction in many fields of interests, the teacher's efforts are spread so thinly that he frequently fails to do a good job in any field. Much of the shop and laboratory equipment is so expensive that no more than token purchases can be made by districts with small budgets. Per pupil costs become abnormally high in specialized fields because of the relatively small number of students enrolled. As a result, many forward-looking educational programs which have been launched with great enthusiasm in small school districts dry up and quietly shrink away.

AREAS OF DIFFICULTY

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Leaders in vocational education have long recognized that many specialized types of vocational education cannot be provided effectively in small rural high schools. Difficulties which have been encountered most frequently are small classes, inadequately prepared teaching personnel, and lack of necessary facilities and equipment. The area vocational school was proposed by this group of educators as a means of meeting these difficulties. In outlining the salient features of such an institution, the Research Committee of the American Vocational Association made the following statement regarding the organization and function of the area vocational school:

The pressure behind the idea of the larger administrative units, the so-called "area" vocational school, is largely one of providing for all youth and adults ways and means of acquiring occupational competency in occupations of their choice. Since small isolated schools, or schools that are situated favorably for only a few occupations, and most local schools in some respects, are unable either to have vocational opportunities at all, or to have any extended range of choice, the problem of the larger unit has

been recognized as necessary to the equalization of opportunities in vocational education. As here used, the larger unit school is designed to serve a group of communities, an entire county, a group of counties, or portions of two or more adjoining states.¹

There are few facilities for industrial education in rural school districts. Of the 113 day trade-industrial high schools in New York State in 1946, ninety-two were located in city school systems, fourteen in village districts with a population of 4500 or more, and only seven were located in rural school districts. A survey of fifteen rural high schools in two New York counties revealed that none of them had a vocational industrial program and none had a work-experience program as a part of preservice occupational training, despite the abundant evidence of need for such educational opportunities. Of 211 employees in industry in these rural counties that were interviewed during this survey, 142 were high school graduates and 69 were drop-outs. Only four of them had had vocational-industrial training in high school. Most of them had taken the general or agricultural curriculum, some stating that they had enrolled in the agriculture course because it was the only opportunity the high school offered for shop work. They had changed jobs frequently during the first few years of employment, some having worked at as many as five different jobs within a period of five years. To say the least, this is an expensive way to secure educational experience.²

COLLEGE ENTRANCE PROGRAM

Similar needs and like difficulties in meeting such needs exist in other general fields of rural education. In many small communities the college entrance program makes such great demands on the relatively small teaching staff and meager financial resources that it seriously limits the services that can be extended to the much larger group

¹ The American Vocational Association, Inc., *An Enlarged Program of Vocational Education with Special Reference to Larger Administrative Units*, Report of the Committee on Research and Publications, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1943, p. 3.

² Julian E. Butterworth and others, *Improving Educational Opportunities in Rural Areas*, University of the State of New York, State Education Department, Albany, August 1946, Bulletin No. 1322, pp. 46-47.

of pupils who will not continue a program of formally organized education beyond the secondary grades. Almost 40 percent of the 24,000 public high schools in the United States have enrollments of fewer than 100 pupils and employ six teachers or less. It scarcely needs to be pointed out that most of these small high schools are in rural areas. In 1946, in such predominantly agricultural states as North Dakota, Kansas, Iowa, South Dakota, and Nebraska, more than 70 percent of all high schools enrolled fewer than 100 pupils.³

In practice, the college preparatory function has a first claim against the resources of the secondary school in the rural community. As the principal and a staff of five or six teachers meet to plan the program of work for the year, tradition and community sentiment require that first they make provision for the English, social studies, mathematics, and science courses which must be offered to meet college entrance requirements. After these provisions have been made, if there are any resources left or if some members of the staff have a few teaching periods unassigned, efforts are made to provide for the special interests and individual needs of pupils who will not go to college. But usually little more can be done than offer opportunities for instruction in vocational agriculture, homemaking, and elementary woodworking. Many small schools cannot provide even these advantages.

The Committee on Rural Community High Schools in Wisconsin reported that the typical curricular pattern for the 231 high schools in Wisconsin which employed six or less teachers was four units of English, four or five units of social science, three or four units of natural science, and two units of mathematics. There were 174 schools that offered no courses in homemaking and 188 schools that offered no courses in agriculture. Seventy schools offered nothing outside the traditional academic subjects.⁴

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Educational theory holds that in the well-integrated elementary program, the regular classroom teacher should give the children op-

³ Walter H. Gaumnitz and others, *How Large Are Our Public High Schools?*, U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C., 1949, Circular No. 304, pp. 19-25.

⁴ The Committee on Rural Community High Schools, *Adventures in Rural Education—A Three Year Report*, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1944, p. 248.

portunity to develop their interests and abilities in music, art, and crafts as a related part of their daily classroom work. Undoubtedly, this theory is educationally sound; but the fact remains that in a great number of elementary classrooms in small rural school districts, children are given little opportunity to develop their interests in music and art. Far too frequently, rural teachers feel themselves inadequately prepared to offer instruction in these fields. Consequently, they spend their energies in areas of instruction where they feel more secure and confident, and the cultural and artistic interests of children are neglected.

The following detailed description by the South Carolina State School Survey Committee of the provisions made for art and music in an elementary classroom was claimed to be typical of 43 percent of the white elementary classrooms and 55 percent of elementary classrooms attended by Negro children in this predominantly rural state:

The walls are bare, save for a brown sepia print of George Washington and a magazine print of General MacArthur. There is no evidence of art and crafts. There are no bulletin boards, no library corner, no science table, no play corner for the young children, and nothing with which to make music. . . .

It is nine o'clock in the morning and the children are seated at their desks. There are thirty-five children—twenty boys and fifteen girls, ranging from five to thirteen years of age. . . . The teacher reads a chapter in the Bible without comment and the children sing: "Are You Sleeping, Brother John?" They do not ask for another song and do not answer at all when the teacher inquires if they wish another tune. Apparently, it makes no difference to the children whether they sing or not.⁵

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

There are, perhaps, but very few individuals in the world who do not suffer from some sort of physical or mental handicap. Fortunately, it is only in a small percent of instances that these handicaps are severe enough to prevent individuals from making a reasonably well-

⁵ The South Carolina Education Survey Committee, *Public Schools of South Carolina*, a Report of the South Carolina Education Survey Commission, Division of Surveys and Field Services, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, 1948, pp. 27-29.

balanced adjustment to normal situations. The point at which such adjustment cannot be made because of physical or mental deficiencies is the demarcation line between so-called normal people and handicapped people.

Some attempts have been made to identify this point in a manner that is objective enough to make reasonably accurate estimates of frequency of occurrence in a typical population. For example, in some school systems the practice of not enrolling children who have intelligence quotients of 75 and above in special classes organized for mentally slow pupils is followed. Eligibility to special sight-saving classes is sometimes based at 20/70 or lower in the better eye after corrections have been made. For the most part, such standards seem to have been established in an arbitrary manner. With these and other types of handicapped children, there are additional factors of a subjective nature influencing each individual case that can be identified and accurately appraised only by a specialist in the field wherein the major difficulty exists.

There is scarcely any community that does not have children whose educational needs demand special attention. The National Society for the Study of Education estimates that from 10 to 12 percent of all children of elementary and secondary school age are atypical to the extent that they need special educational services.⁶

These children do not constitute a homogeneous group. There are children who have visual impairments, speech defects, hearing deficiencies, low mental ability, and serious emotional and social maladjustments. There are cerebral palsy cases and children who have been crippled with poliomyelitis and heart ailments. They may well be as much variation in the facilities and services they need as there is in the nature of their defects.

The following estimates made by the American Association of School Administrators⁷ of different types of physical handicaps to be expected in a normal population reveal the difficulty small rural school

⁶ National Society for the Study of Education, *The Education of Exceptional Children*, Forty-Ninth Yearbook of the Society, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1950, Part II, p. 6.

⁷ American Association of School Administrators, *Health in Schools*, Twentieth Yearbook, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1942, p. 169.

districts face in providing the special facilities and services needed by handicapped children:

<i>For One Child of Each Type for Whom a Special Program Is Required</i>	<i>Corresponding Approximate Size of the School Popula- tion in the District</i>
Deaf	1500
Hard of hearing	300
Partially sighted	2000
Crippled	300
Speech defective	40
Cardiac	150
Epileptic	1200

Through the use of similar ratios as a basis for estimating the normally expected rate of incidence, the Intermediate District Study Commission in New York State made a detailed study of the problem of meeting the special educational needs of physically handicapped children in the Nyack area,⁸ comprised for the most part of the territory included in Rockland County. There were enrolled in the six central rural schools, three village districts, and twenty-nine one-teacher school districts in this area 11,051 children, with 4333 children in the village districts and 6718 in the rural districts. An application of the estimates of expectancy to this pupil enrollment revealed there were likely to be 7 deaf, 36 hard of hearing, 5 partially sighted, 36 crippled, 276 speech defectives, 73 cardiac, and 10 epileptic children in the area. With these children distributed by chance among the thirty-eight independently operating school districts in the area, the number in any one unit was not great enough to permit the employment of the personnel or provision of the facilities necessary to provide the services needed.⁹

⁸ Donald R. Scott, "Methods of Implementing the Educational Program in Different Intermediate Districts," *The Intermediate District in New York State: Special Studies*, University of the State of New York, State Education Department, Albany, 1948, Bulletin 1356, pp. 56-57.

⁹ Shirley Cooper (ed.), *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, Yearbook of the NEA Department of Rural Education, the Department, Washington, D.C., p. 132.

HEALTH EDUCATION SERVICE

The most effective health education programs bring home, school, and community together in a coöperative working relationship for the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of children. Each supplements and complements the other and no sharply drawn lines separate the areas of responsibility. Identification of physical defects in a child is but of little consequence if needed corrections are not made. Acquainting children with the qualities and nutritional values of foods is scarcely worth the efforts involved if the meals they are served are unbalanced and poorly prepared. Knowledge of sound health practices appear as an empty shell to children who are forced to violate them day after day by the conditions imposed by home, school, and community.

Health education permeates every aspect of the school's instructional program from the general condition of the school plant and facilities to instruction on the athletic field and in the kindergarten classroom. It is not something special which is tacked onto the school program to receive attention at a specified time or appropriate place. Yet, it cannot be left for treatment in an incidental manner. Plans must be carefully made, facilities must be provided, and responsibilities must be definitely fixed. Time and experience have proved again and again that what is everybody's responsibility is nobody's responsibility.

It has been pointed out many times that English is a subject which should be taught in every classroom regardless of the subject-matter field that is receiving major emphasis at the moment. But even with the many opportunities which are provided for teaching this fundamental art of communication, there are undoubtedly but few school boards or superintendents who would plan a community educational program without definitely assigning responsibility for teaching English to a person or persons whom they believe to be competent to give instruction in this field. If schools maintain adequate health education programs, they must make like provisions for the facilities and personnel needed to give the necessary instruction. Otherwise, health education becomes a farce—the mere paying of lip service to a broad educational goal that has only been halfheartedly accepted.

There is little agreement on the number and type of personnel needed to maintain a good health education program. Obviously, such factors as family income, general conditions in the home, the educational background of parents, the quality and extent of medical and dental services available in the community, and the services provided by local departments of health and public welfare should be given careful consideration in planning the school health education program. The educational needs of rural people are too many and the resources available for meeting them are too few to permit needless duplication of effort or competition between agencies and institutions in any aspect of the educational program.

Practices followed in city school systems give some indication of the facilities and personnel requirements for a satisfactory health education program.

The health education staff in a small city school system which enrolls approximately 4000 children consists of

1. A physician, who is employed on a yearly basis but who devotes only half his time to school health work.
2. A school dentist who is employed on a half-time basis.
3. A full-time dental hygienist.
4. Three full-time school nurses.
5. The director of health education, who is a speech specialist and examines all children in the school for possible speech defects. In addition to this, he tests children for auditory defects with the use of the audiometer and pitch range tests.
6. A psychologist, who is director of special classes for retarded children who conducts an extensive program of mental testing and maintains close contact with all children in the school system who have been designated as problem cases.
7. A full-time clerk in the health office.

In addition, there are the teachers of physical education classes, teachers who give special attention to physically and mentally handicapped children, and the regular classroom teachers.

The suite of health rooms is by no means pretentious, but it provides equipment suitable for dental work, an examination room which

affords privacy for the person being examined, toilet facilities, and adequate office filing equipment.

Many school districts follow the practice of giving children physical examinations. In some states it is required by law, but responsibility for determining the character of the physical examination rests, to a great degree, with local school boards. In some instances, the examinations are of a cursory nature, consisting merely of checking height, weight, and noting diseased or enlarged tonsils, decayed teeth, general physical deformities, and visual and auditory deficiencies. In other school districts where resources are available and school board policy calls for it, the examination is of a much more intensive character, including a urinalysis and blood tests and giving attention to heart and lung conditions and to nutritional deficiencies. Frequently, parents are urged to be present at the more thorough physical examination.

It is reasonable to believe that the general physical condition of children will be much better understood by school officials and teachers in a district which employs a physician who devotes all, or at least a major part, of his time to school health problems, and is supported in his work by a dental hygienist, a school psychologist, a speech specialist, school nurse, and adequate clerical assistance, than in a district that provides the services of a school physician only for a few hours once each year.

In a survey of selected city school systems, the American Association of School Administrators found that school physicians, or medical advisers, as they were commonly known, dentists, oral hygienists, psychiatrists, psychologists, nutritionists, and school nurses were employed by larger school systems. In systems where the total enrollment was 2500 or less, the only provisions made for special health personnel were a school physician on a half-time basis, a nutritionist, and a school nurse. In systems where the enrollment was less than 1000, the only provision made for special health personnel was for a school nurse usually employed on a part-time basis.¹⁰

The inadequacy of medical and dental services in rural areas has been pointed out frequently by both the medical profession and stu-

¹⁰ American Association of School Administrators, *Health in Schools*, pp. 250-251.

dents of rural sociology. According to data cited by Nelson, there was one doctor for every 580 people living in urban communities in 1940 and in rural areas but one for every 1336 people. The disparity in dental services was even greater, with a ratio of one dentist to 1337 people in the urban centers and one to 4386 in the rural communities.¹¹ Such inadequacies increase the need for effective programs of health education in rural areas. At the same time, small school district organization makes the development and maintenance of such programs difficult.

GUIDANCE SERVICES

There is no one best method of organizing and administering a guidance program. Size of school; the special knowledge and skills of teachers; the level of instruction, whether it be elementary, secondary, or both, whether or not follow-up and counseling services are extended to the adult population; the purposes of the guidance program as they are conceived by the instructional staff and the community; and working relationships with business and industrial establishments and with other organizations and institutions in the community are factors which help to shape the guidance program and to give it local character.

Crow and Crow have pointed out that there are three general forms of organization for the administration and operation of guidance programs: "centralized, noncentralized, or a combination of centralization and noncentralization."¹² With the centralized form of organization, the guidance services of the entire school system are coordinated under a single administrative head with a group of specially trained workers assuming most of the responsibility for measurement, counseling, and other major aspects of the guidance program.

Almost the entire responsibility for providing guidance services is placed on the regular classroom teachers under the noncentralized form of organization. Little attempt is made to coordinate their efforts or to direct their activities other than through the exercise of general

¹¹ Lowry Nelson, *Rural Sociology*, American Book Company, New York, 1948, pp. 506-509.

¹² Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow, *An Introduction to Guidance: Principles and Practices*, American Book Company, New York, 1951, p. 52.

administrative control. Guidance is closely integrated with instruction and special assistance is seldom sought because very little provision is made for supplying it.

A combination of these two widely different approaches to providing guidance services takes advantage of the flexibility in the non-centralized form of organization and at the same time makes available the services of some specialists to supplement the work of classroom teachers. It assigns responsibilities, gives a measure of unity to the program, and makes the provision of guidance services a clearly recognized function of the school.

Regardless of what form of organization is followed, if the guidance program is to reach and serve in an effective manner all the pupils in the school, it needs to be supported by:

1. Continuous up-to-date personal information in usable form about each individual pupil. This information should include indices of intelligence, achievement, interests, and traits; records of physical growth, health conditions, educational plans, occupational experience and vocational interests; indications of social and emotional adjustments and family background.
 2. Vocational and educational information ample for acquainting students with the entrance requirements, costs, and scholarship opportunities in institutions of higher learning; educational opportunities in commercial, technical, and vocational schools; occupational opportunities, job requirements, and employment trends in the local community or immediate vicinity of the school and for the nation as a whole.
 3. Counseling services which will help each individual pupil understand himself—recognize his aptitudes and abilities as well as his limitations and deficiencies; identify his major problems—personality, health, social, financial, and educational; and formulate plans and initiate action toward their solution.
 4. Placement or employment service to assist pupils in securing part-time employment when necessary, transferring from one school to another when such moves must be made and making the transition from secondary schools to suitable institutions of higher learning, and entering permanent employment if the student's formally organized educational program terminates with the secondary school.
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5. Follow-up or adjustment service which maintains contact with youth after leaving school for the purpose of rendering further assistance.

No attempt has been made here to outline a complete guidance program. Rather, the effort has been directed toward pointing out some of the essential aspects of a satisfactory guidance program. Experience in many rural schools has proved again and again that they cannot be provided without the assistance of well-informed personnel to whom clear and precise responsibility can be assigned.

A study of guidance services in forty high schools in California that had a pupil population of 350 pupils or less revealed:

1. An almost complete lack of any organized placement service or follow-up service for graduates and dropouts.
2. A haphazard, passive attitude of "cure" rather than "prevention" in the provision of counseling services. The time allocated to guidance was, all too frequently, "whatever time remains."
3. Individual schools attempted to maintain complete pupil accounting systems, but transfer of information between schools was limited, in most instances, to transcripts of academic grades and intelligence test scores. Only eleven of the forty schools reported evaluation of personality traits and only fourteen schools listed teacher observations and anecdotes as part of the records maintained in their system of pupil accounting.¹³

A study of guidance services in eighty-two rural and village high schools in Kansas showed that only about one-fourth of the schools assigned definite responsibility for guidance to a particular person. Responsibilities most frequently identified with the guidance function were discipline, supervision of extracurricular activities, and curriculum advisement. Job placement was seldom reported.

School records, in most instances, consisted of scholastic achievement and attendance records. Few schools maintained records of health habits, leisure-time activities, and information regarding areas of special ability or aptitude. Individual differences were most commonly recognized in conferences with failing pupils and through

¹³ Fred Greenough and others, *An Adequate and Well-Planned Guidance Program for a Small High School*, Carpinteria Union High School, California, March, 1947 (mimeographed).

variation in the number of subjects carried. Four schools out of five had no follow-up program for either high school dropouts or graduates.¹⁴

According to estimates developed in the Intermediate District Study¹⁵ in New York State, a guidance counselor, if supported by the classroom teachers and the services of such specialists as the school physician, nurse, dentist, psychologist, and attendance officer, could adequately serve 600 to 700 pupils in grades 7-12.

The pattern of organization for guidance in elementary schools places direct responsibility for counseling on the regular classroom teachers, but makes the services of such specialists as the school psychologist, nurse, physician, attendance supervisor, and social workers available to the teachers on a consultative basis. In some well-organized guidance programs, a counseling supervisor works with the teachers in a number of elementary schools.

Well-organized, adequately staffed, and well-equipped guidance programs are expensive. The expenditure necessary to secure well-trained and efficient personnel and to provide the necessary clerical assistance, educational and occupational information, tests, and other guidance materials is an important, but frequently too large, item for the budget of the small school system. With the funds that are available, only the bare minimum essentials of a program of guidance services can be provided.

SUPERVISION OF ATTENDANCE

The term "truant officer," commonly used in rural areas until recent years to designate the supervisor of attendance, suggests the concept children and adults had of the functions of this educational officer. His chief duty, it was believed, was to find children who were not in school and bring them to school. He was thought of, primarily, as a law-enforcement officer. His methods of dealing with children and parents more nearly resembled the work of a police officer with law-

¹⁴ Dorothy M. Clendenen, *A Study of the Guidance Activities of 134 Secondary Schools of Kansas*, Master's Thesis, Syracuse University, 1945 (typewritten), p. 98.

¹⁵ J. Cayce Morrison and others, *The Intermediate District in New York State: Special Studies*, University of the State of New York, State Education Department, Albany, 1948, Bulletin 1356, p. 59.

breakers than that of a teacher concerned with the educational growth and development of children. His usual working procedure was to secure from the principal or teacher the names of children who were absent, call at their homes, and bring them to school. As he moved about the community he was on the lookout for truants in the stores, on village streets, and along country lanes. When found, they were taken directly to school.

This type of attendance officer had no professional preparation. He knew but little about the problems children face in school and at home, and those that did claim his attention were frequently considered as inconsequential. He was impatient with parents who failed to have their children in school and often regarded them as deliberate lawbreakers. Low salary and lack of prestige attached to the office frequently forced the board of education to appoint persons to the office who could not hold any other position.¹⁶

The concept of attendance service developed in recent years, largely through the experiences of city school systems, places emphasis on removing the causes of nonattendance. It seeks to develop a situation in which children can come to school willingly without the pressures of social and psychological problems that create tension and frustration. It strives for freer, easier communication between the home, the school, and the community in which all function so that they may supplement and support one another and assume their appropriate responsibilities. It is a means of helping individual children understand and use effectively the educational services the school offers and of acquainting the school with the unique problems the child brings with him from his family background.

Any person who works effectively in the field of attendance administration and supervision must understand the school program almost as thoroughly as the principal and teachers themselves and must be skilled in interpreting it to the parents. He must have a sympathetic understanding of the needs and interests of young children and teen-agers. He must be sensitive to the problems of family life, as they are related to school attendance, and exercise tact and

¹⁶ Arch O. Heck, *Administration of Pupil Personnel*, Ginn and Company, New York, 1929, pp. 86-87.

good judgment in working toward their solution. He must be familiar with the agencies and organization of the community that serve children and youth and aid in directing their efforts into areas of need.

Attendance work "involves interviews (1) with the individual child having difficulty in using the school; (2) with teacher, principal, psychologist, school nurse, or other school personnel who can both contribute to and gain from the worker's understanding of the individual child; (3) with parents; (4) with social workers in community agencies who may already know the child or who may be helpful to him or his family."¹⁷

The following statement of the major responsibilities of attendance workers in the West Virginia county-unit district indicates the range of problems with which they are concerned and the channels of community life through which they work. They are responsible for

1. Adjustment of child and parent problems related to school attendance.
2. Enforcement of the attendance laws.
3. Alleviation of indigency to help children stay in school.
4. Securing health and welfare services necessary to correct maladjusted children.
5. Coördination of the services of community organizations to promote better school attendance.
6. Supervision and administration of the school census.
7. Supervision of work permits for children within the age limits of the compulsory attendance laws.

Under the direction of well-qualified, capable attendance workers, a positive approach to enforcement of the compulsory attendance law is made frequently through involving parents in organized child study groups, advisory councils, and community surveys. By means of these and other devices for group work and study, parents fill in gaps in the school's knowledge of the child and at the same time receive information from the teacher about the child's activities in school which truly makes his educational development a joint home-school enterprise. With such understanding, difficult attendance problems almost cease to exist. The compulsory-attendance law becomes effective with-

¹⁷ Ruth Smalley, "Helping Children Use What the School Offers," *Education for Victory*, April 20, 1944, p. 7.

out the misunderstandings, unpleasantness, and ill effects which are so often by-products of direct, harsh methods of enforcement.

There is wide variation in the work load of attendance workers, due in part to the concept held by the community of what constitutes satisfactory attendance services and in part to the support the attendance worker receives from such other school personnel as physicians, school nurses, and guidance workers. In many school systems, these services are unified into a department of pupil personnel services.

From a survey of practices in 189 cities in 1945, Cook found that in most cities the work load for each visiting teacher (attendance worker) was from 2000 to 4000 children. In commenting on this general indication of practice, she pointed out that the Michigan plan, which provides state aid to local districts for establishing attendance services, estimates that one attendance worker should serve a school population of 2500.¹⁸

The salaries of qualified, capable attendance workers approximate closely the salaries of teachers in most cities where well-organized programs of attendance services have been established. The per pupil cost of pupil personnel services, including supervision of attendance, health, and welfare service, in twelve selected cities in 1945 ranged from \$1.22 to \$6.01 and constituted from 1 to 3 percent of the total per pupil cost. Where expenditures for attendance supervision was segregated from other pupil personnel services, the per pupil cost in 266 city school systems ranged from 10 cents to slightly more than \$3, with most cities spending between 40 cents and \$1.¹⁹

Small local districts with limited budgets are seldom able to provide adequate attendance services. Low enrollments do not warrant the employment of full-time, well-qualified attendance workers. The function of supervision of attendance may be assigned to the school nurse, guidance director, or supervisor of transportation if the school district is large enough to employ such personnel. But in a great many rural districts, personnel is limited to the principal and classroom teachers. In such instances, responsibility for attendance supervision is added to

¹⁸ Katherine M. Cook, *The Place of Visiting Teacher Services in the School Program*, U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C., 1945, Bulletin No. 6, pp. 20-21.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

their already overloaded work schedules or given to a part-time, non-professional employee who has no qualifications for or interest in the work. Conquently, the needs of the children are not adequately met.

OTHER ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Small rural school districts are placed at a disadvantage in providing supervision of instruction, administering the school transportation program, and purchasing school supplies and equipment. The services of a school psychologist are unknown to most rural children. Lack of personnel limits adult education in most rural areas to the work of county agriculture extension agents and the vocational agriculture and homemaking teachers in the high school. Well-organized professionally directed recreation programs for rural youth and adults are the exception rather than the rule. Library services seldom extend beyond children's contacts with books in the classrooms, study halls, and during their brief visits to a centrally located school library. Children of superior mental ability, with their progress geared to a slower moving group average, pass through the successive stages of annoyance, boredom, and frustration and frequently become problem cases because the small neighborhood school lacks the vision, facilities, and personnel and fiscal ability to meet their needs.

LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

Consistently over the years rural people have turned first to the local school district for the educational services they have needed and wanted. When it proved to be inadequate, efforts have been made to strengthen it by reshaping its legal framework, increasing its taxing powers, and enlarging the area of its operation through school district reorganization.

A great deal of progress in local school district reorganization was made during the period 1930-1950. In 1932 there were 127,529 local school districts in the United States. By 1950 the number had been reduced to 84,468, a decrease of approximately 33 percent. Over the years the rate of reduction in the number of school districts has rapidly increased. During the six-year period, 1932 to 1938, the num-

ber of districts decreased by 6.4 percent; during the next six-year period, 1938 to 1944, there was a decrease of 7.8 percent; from 1944 to 1950 the decrease amounted to 23.3 percent.²⁰ But even with this remarkable progress, the great majority of local administrative units are too small to provide adequate educational programs.

In 1947-1948 slightly more than 70 percent of all school districts in the United States employed nine or fewer teachers. There were 75,294 one-teacher schools in operation which, in the majority of cases, served an area that constituted an administrative unit. More than 63,000 local administrative units maintained elementary schools only. Small districts and small schools were most numerous in the great agricultural states such as Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

COMMUNITY DISTRICTS

Trends in local school district organization are definitely toward the establishment of administrative units that correspond to the natural sociological community. Such administrative organization is practical. It brings people together in educational planning and in the support of schools who have come to know each other personally through their associations in business, industry, local civil government, church work, recreation, and other types of social activities. It lends itself well to democratic action. The warm personal relationships engendered by community life, and the thorough acquaintance with educational needs and resources, give a strength and an earthy character to the educational program which are frequently lacking in large organizations that operate on an impersonal basis.

In sparsely settled rural areas the natural local community is frequently too small to provide all of the services that should be included in a well-rounded educational program, just as they are too small to maintain institutions, organizations, and business establishments necessary to meet all the occupational, business, recreational, and medical needs of the people. Services that are required by a majority of the people continuously or at frequently recurring intervals can be sup-

²⁰ Howard A. Dawson, "Trends in School District Reorganization," *The Phi Delta Kappan*, March, 1951, pp. 8-13.

plied; but when the element of specialization appears, the size of the service area must be extended.

LIMITATIONS OF COMMUNITY DISTRICT

Experience over a quarter of a century in New York State where the area included in newly formed rural school districts corresponds closely to the natural sociological community, has provided convincing evidence that the community school district is well adapted to meeting the general educational needs of children, youth, and adults. It has constructed and equipped substantial, attractive, functional buildings; it has secured and held well-qualified teachers; it has attracted capable administrative leadership; it has provided an instructional program that has met the educational needs common to all children and youth. But at the same time, it has demonstrated inability to provide many of the specialized services essential to a well-rounded comprehensive program.

Careful research sponsored by the New York State Council on Rural Education and conducted by the state department of education showed that health, guidance, and psychological services were inadequate; the special educational needs of physically and mentally handicapped children were frequently unidentified and unmet; more than half of the farm boys dropped out of high school before graduation; lack of coördination in the administration of the school transportation program resulted in unnecessary costs and needless duplication of effort; vocational educational opportunities were limited in most schools to vocational agriculture, homemaking, business education, and to a few courses in general shop practice; and supervision of instruction failed to meet the needs of classroom teachers.²¹

DIFFICULTIES IN SMALL HIGH SCHOOLS

A study²² of enrollments, course offerings, and class size in six central rural high schools and one small union free high school in the Boonville area of New York State reveals some of the difficulties

²¹ E. R. Eastman, *Are We Giving Them the Opportunity They Deserve?*, New York State Council on Rural Education, Ithaca, 1945, pp. 4-22.

²² Shirley Cooper, *Possibilities of an Area School*, Washington, D.C., 1945 (unpublished material).

high schools with small enrollments face in their attempts to provide for the special interests and needs of rural youth (see Table 11).

TABLE 11. Enrollments in Selected Courses Offered in Seven New York High Schools

Name of School	Enrollment Grades 7-12	Total Enrollment in Selected Courses					
		English I	Social Studies 9	Latin I	Agri- culture I	Home- making I	Trig.
Boonville	264	54	52	6	5	19	19
Constableville	104	19	19		7	12	3
Forestport	60	9	6	9		1	2
Lyons Falls*	75	11	12	6			9
Port Leyden	135	27	28			6	9
Remsen	100	17	17		4	8	3
West Leyden	129	20	20		9	12	3

* A union free high school.

The enrollment in grades 7-12 in these rural community high schools ranged from 264 in the largest to 60 in the smallest. Factors which have been influential in keeping these schools smaller than the average central rural school in the state have been sparsity of population; heavy snowfall, making transportation difficult; and the prevalence of strong, well-established neighborhood and community centers which cannot be disregarded when school districts are formed on the basis of the natural sociological community.

In these small high schools the enrollment in the general courses, English and social studies for example, which are usually required subjects for all students, was sufficiently large in most instances for classes of reasonable size. But with specialization, even to the extent of offering such well-established courses as Latin, agriculture, home-making, and trigonometry, which are usually elective subjects of interest to only a part of the students, classes became small and, as a consequence, per pupil instructional costs rapidly rose.

A complete review of the course offerings and enrollments in these high schools showed that 73 percent of the agriculture classes, 43 percent of the foreign language classes, 71 percent of the art classes, and 60 percent of the general shop classes include five or fewer pupils.

It is scarcely necessary to point out that, in areas where local districts large enough to provide adequate programs are impracticable, if the needs of rural youth are to be met, some form of administrative organization must be developed which will make more efficient use of the community's educational resources. Local school district reorganization in many sparsely settled rural areas is only a partial solution to the problem. A form of administrative organization is needed which makes it possible and practical for small community school districts to pool their resources and share in the benefits of specialized educational services.

PROVIDING ESSENTIAL SERVICES

SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTION

Supervision of instruction was the first and is, undoubtedly, the most widely accepted service of intermediate districts to local administrative units. Almost from the beginning of organized state public school systems, county superintendents have been charged with the responsibility of improving instruction in rural schools. Frequently, the circumstances under which they worked, lack of familiarity with the better instructional methods and materials, and limited understanding of the purposes and processes of supervision prevented development of strong, forward-looking programs of instructional improvement. But, even with the many limitations which have been recognized at almost every stage in the development of state school systems, legislative action and professional leadership have continuously sought to improve supervision of instruction by strengthening the intermediate district superintendency. These efforts bear witness to its usefulness and practicability.

The most common approach to improving supervision of instruction in rural areas has been the addition of one or more supervisors to the county superintendent's staff. One of the earliest and most widely known rural supervisory programs was developed in the Negro schools of the South. Through a gift of \$1 million made by Anna T. Jeanes of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1907, the Jeanes foundation was established to improve Negro rural schools. Funds made available by

this foundation made it possible for county boards of education to employ Negro supervisors, commonly known as Jeanes teachers.²³

The first Jeanes supervisor was employed in Henrico County, Virginia, in 1908. By 1914 Jeanes supervisors were working in thirty-five school divisions in Virginia. Under the guidance of these supervisors, drab, barren, monotonous Negro schools took on an atmosphere of vigor, warmth, and interest. Homemaking practices, knowledge of agriculture, health habits, shop work, and intimate acquaintance with the world of nature, which pushed itself forward to the doorsteps of rural schools, were skillfully blended with teaching the three R's.²⁴ The educational leadership of the Jeanes supervisor attracted favorable attention throughout the South. By 1947 these supervisory programs were in operation in fourteen Southern states and in the Virgin Islands. Over the years the contributions of the Jeanes Foundation to this program have gradually decreased, with local and state school systems assuming a larger proportion of the cost.

Wisconsin claims the distinction of being the first state to make general statewide provision for the employment of supervisors for rural schools. In 1915 legislation was enacted which authorized the employment of at least one supervisor in each county of the state. Since there were not at that time, and up to 1951, any county boards of education in Wisconsin, county supervisors were employed by and were directly responsible to the county superintendent. Salaries are paid on a monthly basis by the county board of supervisors, but the counties are reimbursed by the state for expenditures for both salary and travel expense.

Subsequent legislation in Wisconsin has made it mandatory that at least one supervisor be employed in each county of the state. If there are more than 120 teachers in the county, the county superintendent must employ at least two supervisors. In 1950 there were 100 supervisors employed in the 72 county school systems of the state.

²³ Will W. Alexander, *The Slater and Jeanes Funds, An Educator's Approach to a Difficult Social Problem*, the Trustees of the John F. Slater Fund, 726 Jackson Place, Washington, D.C., 1934, Occasional Papers No. 28, pp. 2-5.

²⁴ Marcia Everett (ed.), *The Rural Supervisor at Work*, Yearbook of the NEA Department of Rural Education, the Department, Washington, D.C., 1949, pp. 160-162.

The rural supervisor in New Jersey has been designated since the beginning of this instructional service, more than thirty years ago, as a helping teacher. This title has continued in use, perhaps, because it so nearly describes the purposes of supervision as conceived at the time the program was initiated and the manner in which the supervisors work with teachers, pupils, and parents in the rural districts of the state.

The New Jersey helping teachers are appointed by the state commissioner of education and paid from state funds, but they work under the direction of the county superintendent as members of his staff. Helping teachers have no administrative responsibilities. They spend their time in the rural schools working directly with teachers, pupils, and parents for the improvement of instruction. In 1950 there were forty-four general and sixteen special helping teachers working in the twenty-one county school systems of New Jersey.

In 1946-1947 there were 1072 white supervisors and 139 Negro supervisors employed in twenty intermediate district states.²⁵ With but few exceptions, they were members of the intermediate district superintendent's staff. In most instances, each of them worked with teachers in a number of rural districts, planning with teachers, demonstrating teaching methods, evaluating pupil growth, studying community resources, assisting with parent-teacher study groups, and preparing curriculum materials in an effort to give rural children better educational opportunities.

MOBILITY OF PERSONNEL AND MATERIALS

Shared financial support, central location of pooled service, and mobility of personnel and materials are underlying principles in cooperative programs of specialized services. Examples of situations in which two or more small rural school districts have entered into joint contractual agreements in the employment of itinerant instructional personnel are numerous. This practice was well illustrated by the contractual agreements existing in 1945 between the small rural school districts in the Boonville area of New York State (see Table 11).

²⁵ Howard A. Dawson and others, *Your School District*, the Report of the National Commission on School District Reorganization, NEA Department of Rural Education, Washington, D.C., 1948, Table IX, p. 280.

Itinerant Personnel. A school nurse was employed coöperatively by Boonville, Forestport, and Remsen. Two-fifths of her time was given to Boonville, two-fifths to Forestport, and one-fifth to Remsen with the salary prorated on the basis of time allocation. Constableville, Port Leyden, and West Leyden jointly employed a school nurse, an attendance officer, a music teacher, an art teacher, and a physical education teacher. The services and expenditures for these five teachers were divided equally among the three coöperating schools. In another contractual arrangement, five schools secured the services of a school counselor through coöperation with the county vocational board. And, in another instance, a dental hygienist was employed through a joint arrangement between one of the schools in this area and a school in an adjoining county.

In most instances, such contractual arrangements have been made on the basis of permissive legislation, which legalizes joint school district expenditures without establishing the legal framework needed to give stability to the programs and facilitate their operation. The greatest disadvantage to this method of providing special educational services is that programs must be planned on a year-to-year basis and that at any time they may be disrupted by withdrawal of one or more districts from the contractual agreement.

The most effective programs of special services have been developed in situations in which the intermediate district organization is able to secure participation of all districts within the limits of its jurisdiction in supporting the program and to distribute the services in an equitable manner throughout the area. In McHenry County, Illinois, a counselor for socially maladjusted children is employed on a countywide basis and is a member of the county superintendent's professional staff. He works with all schools in the county and serves children who need his help regardless of the school district in which he happens to reside.

Music instruction in the small rural school districts of De Kalb County, Illinois, has been greatly improved through the services of a part-time music supervisor. Through the leadership of the county superintendent, the coöperation of all boards of education has been enlisted to the extent of contributing the necessary funds to pay for the music supervisor's services and permitting schools to be closed while teachers attend brief instructional workshops. Under the guid-

ance of the supervisor, the teachers prepare a six-week plan for music instruction and develop the understanding needed to carry out the program of instruction in their own schools. Six times each year the music supervisor comes into the county for these brief institutes. These nominal expenditures of time and financial resources have resulted in marked improvement in music instruction in the rural schools throughout the county.

Mobile Shop Units. Two methods are used to finance the program of special services to the local school districts in San Diego County, California. A substantial part of the cost of the program is met by state appropriations approximating \$3 per pupil in average daily attendance in all districts of the county. This fund is supplemented by contributions from local districts made for the purchase of services provided in addition to those financed by the state appropriations. Mobile equipment and instructional material, as well as the services of itinerant professional personnel, have been used to supplement the educational programs in the small school districts in San Diego County.

Mobile shop units have brought new educational opportunities to children in the smaller elementary schools. Discarded navy ordnance trucks acquired by the county board of education soon after the close of World War II were equipped with light power and hand tools and with clamps, vises, and other equipment commonly used in well-equipped elementary school shops. Each morning each of the four shop teachers drives his shop to a small elementary school and within a few minutes the children are busily engaged in their weekly period of shop work. The children work with wood, leather, plastics, ceramics, metal, and paper, frequently creating small objects related to their classroom work in social studies, English, and arithmetic.²⁶ The children and teachers may work with the equipment in the regular classrooms or, if the day is warm and sunny, under the extended wings of the truck.

Audio-Visual Aids. Extensive use of audio-visual aids and materials in city school systems has given ample proof of their value as

²⁶ John S. Carroll, *Our School—Our Community*, 1950 Annual Report, Office of the Superintendent of Schools, San Diego County, California, 1951, p. 19.

instructional implements and has created a demand for them in rural schools. To meet these demands, audio-visual service centers have been established, usually in conjunction with county superintendents' offices, which serve a number of school districts or an entire county. In these centers a wide range of materials, including charts, maps, pictures, diagrams, slide films, filmstrips, and sound recordings, are brought together, classified, and made available for use in the classrooms in the county. Sound and projection equipment is a part of the instructional resources of these centers. Where programs have been well established, a weekly delivery service takes requisitioned materials to all schools in the county. Frequently, classroom teachers come together in workshops in the audio-visual center to develop slides, charts, and models especially adapted to their own instructional programs.

Audio-visual aids departments have been established in fifty-seven of the fifty-eight counties in California. In thirty-eight counties there is at least one director of audio-visual education who devotes 100 percent of his time to audio-visual education. In nineteen other counties, there is a part-time director of audio-visual education. In addition, there are twenty-two city school systems that employ full-time directors of audio-visual education, and fifty-five cities that employ part-time directors.

The program of audio-visual services at the intermediate district level in California has advanced far because of the support received through the county school service fund. In 1948-1949 the provisions made for audio-visual equipment and services in the county school service budgets of the fifty-eight counties amounted to over \$1 million. In addition to these budgetary appropriations, local district contracts with county superintendents' offices for audio-visual services in twenty-four different counties of the state amounted to \$131,610.²⁷

Teaching Materials Bureau. Five local school districts in Kitsap County, Washington, with the coöperation of the county superintendent of schools and the board of county commissioners, have established a teaching materials bureau. This service is financed by joint contribu-

²⁷ C. C. Trillingham, "Audio-Visual Education," *Second Report of the Assembly Interim Committee on Public Education*, Assembly of the State of California, Sacramento, 1949, pp. 118-122.

tions of the local districts and the county governing body. Each of the five districts contributes an amount, equal to 50 cents for each child in average daily attendance, which is used to pay the salary of the director of the teaching materials bureau, to provide secretarial assistance, and to meet the travel expenses of the director. The board of county commissioners contributes an equal amount, which is used for the purchase of teaching materials. Participation of the county political board in this educational program indicates a need for a stronger intermediate district in this state.

The term "teaching materials" rather than "audio-visual aids" has been consistently used since the beginning of this coöperative educational service in an effort to broaden the concept of instructional materials. Filmstrips, flat pictures, picture files, slides, booklets, transcriptions, projectors, screens, charts, and museum exhibits are made available. Organizing and planning field trips for students and teachers that make use of instructional resources in the locality have been one of the most useful services of the bureau.

In a period of four years the bureau has acquired more than 1000 units of instructional aids. These materials are organized into packets classified on the basis of units of instruction developed by the classroom teachers. Catalogs are in the hands of all teachers as a ready source of information regarding the material available. Prompt delivery makes them a functional part of every classroom teacher's working equipment.

Examples of special services provided at the intermediate district level to supplement the educational programs in small rural districts are numerous. Bookmobiles which distribute reading materials from a central library to rural schools and to the adult population are no longer a novelty. Mobile health units staffed by competent physicians and nurses immunize children against communicable diseases, carefully examine them for physical defects and organic diseases, and initiate corrective measures before irreparable injury has occurred. Special consultants meet and advise with teachers, school board members, and parents on problems of child growth and development, curriculum revision, and organization and administration of the school system.

AGENCIES OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

When the need for such services extends beyond the resources of the intermediate district as it is now organized in many states, people turn to other agencies of government for the educational services they need and want. Legislation creating the county vocational education and extension board, enacted in New York State in 1926, is one example of this practice. This law authorizes the county board of supervisors in any county to establish a special board for the purpose of giving instruction in agriculture and home economics and in such other subject-matter fields as may be approved by the state commissioner of education. The nine-member boards established under the provisions of this law have authority to employ a director, supervisors, teachers, and such other personnel as are in their judgment needed. These boards are entitled to receive and administer state aid appropriations equal to one-half the cost of the program operated.

In 1948 there were nineteen county vocational education and extension boards in New York State. Through these boards, rural children, youth, and adults received such educational advantages as the services of a nurse-teacher, dental hygienist, school psychologist, and guidance director. In some counties formally organized instruction in agriculture, industrial arts, vocational-industrial education, physical education, art, and music was provided through this board.

There are obvious advantages to this type of administrative organization. First and most important, it is a workable means of giving rural people educational advantages that cannot be provided by small local districts. Second, it affords the stability essential to sound, long-range educational planning. Third, through the lay board which exercises general administrative control, it provides a means of making the program responsive to the interests and needs of local people.

The disadvantages of a separately organized and independently operating agency established for the administration of a particular phase or segment of public education at the county or local community level can be discerned with equal clarity. In effect, it creates a dual system of administrative control. The educational resources of the

county and local communities are divided rather than united. The difficulty of developing a closely integrated educational program for rural children and youth is needlessly increased through almost unavoidable duplication of effort and competition for educational resources.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

The functions of the intermediate district organization are of a dual nature. In the first place, it should provide stimulating educational leadership which will bring about the best possible utilization of all educational resources under the control of the local districts. The firmly established principles of local initiative and local control have proven their worth in public education. The intermediate district should strengthen rather than weaken the efforts of rural people in the initiation, support, and control of an educational program adapted to the needs and resources of each community. The services of supervisors, consultants, and special-resource persons should be directed first toward this end.

In the second place, the intermediate district should be ready to supplement the programs of local districts with essential services which cannot be provided by the local districts. Skillful administrative control is needed to prevent these services from becoming mere mechanical aids which have no basic integral relationships to the needs and interests of the people in the local districts. A few well-grounded services that are truly functional and meaningful parts of local school district programs are far more valuable than a host of dangling appendages which have little or no fundamental relationship to what pupils and teachers are actually doing in the classrooms. The intermediate district is in and of itself a community of local school districts bound together, not merely by the mandates of legislative action, but by the spirit of mutual aid. Recognition of varying needs and interests, sharing financial responsibility, and wide participation in administrative control are as fundamental to continued successful action in this community of school districts as they are to social processes in the smaller communities of families of which it is comprised.

The coöperative efforts of small local districts in providing supple-

mentary educational services through an intermediate district organization will be most effective when

1. A representative lay board formulates policies and exercises general control of the program.
2. The intermediate district superintendent is appointed by this board and serves as its chief executive officer.
3. Provisions are made for a budget, supported by local, intermediate, and state funds, that is planned and controlled by the board and its chief executive officer.
4. Close working relationships are maintained through such devices as administrative councils, advisory groups, working committees, and continuous professional contacts between the local administrative units and the intermediate district. Sharing in support, sharing in the formulation of policy, sharing in control, and sharing in the benefits are earmarks of sound coöperative effort and successful democratic practice.
5. Services provided by the intermediate district are clearly supplemental in nature. As long as a local unit of school administration functions, it should be responsible for all the educational services it can provide on an efficient and economically sound basis. Only those things which local units cannot do well should become responsibilities of the intermediate district.
6. Services provided by the intermediate district are closely integrated with, or give fundamental support to, the educational programs maintained and operated by the local districts.
7. Procedures are established for mobility of personnel, materials, and equipment. Many of the essential services of a well-rounded educational program must be brought to the children in sparsely settled rural areas by the intermediate district organization.

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Report of a plan for providing educational services to supplement the educational programs of small local administrative units through an intermediate school district. Specific examples of problems involved in

providing special services in several districts are pointed out and discussed. Includes a proposed law.

Butterworth, Julian E., and Dawson, Howard A., *The Modern Rural School*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1952, Chapter XV.

Discusses the administrative problem of providing such special services as guidance, health education services, education of handicapped children, and supervision of attendance in rural areas where local school districts are small. Gives objective estimate of expected incidence of various types of physical handicaps in a normal population.

Committee on Rural Community High Schools, C. E. Ragsdale (chairman), *Education for Rural Wisconsin's Tomorrow*, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1946.

Points out educational services that should be included in a well-rounded program of rural education. Identifies common limitations in existing programs. Suggests how improvement can be made through better administrative organization.

Cooper, Shirley (ed.), *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, Yearbook of the NEA Department of Rural Education, Washington, D.C., 1950.

In an analysis of the county superintendency many examples of services provided at the intermediate district level to enrich the curriculums of schools in rural areas are cited. One complete chapter is devoted to the intermediate district organization and functions.

Everett, Marcia (ed.), *The Rural Supervisor at Work*, Yearbook of the NEA Department of Rural Education, Washington, D.C., 1949.

Cites many examples of outstanding programs of supervision of instruction in rural areas. The county superintendent's office is identified with the provision of supervisory services.

National Education Association, Educational Policies Commission, *Education for All American Youth*, the Commission, Washington, D.C., 1944

This valuable contribution to rural education describes in considerable detail an educational program suited to the needs of youth in a typical rural community. Special opportunities that cannot be provided in the local district of Farmville are provided through an administrative organization that serves a larger area than the local community.

CHAPTER IX

The Professional Staff of the County Superintendent's Office

The gradual but consistent change which took place in the county superintendency during the period 1930-1950 was marked by the acquisition of additional responsibilities. With each passing year this office has been called upon to provide a greater measure of administrative and supervisory leadership in such features of the rural educational program as pupil transportation, adult education, school lunch programs, vocational and personal guidance, measurement and evaluation, health education services, reorganization of local administrative units and attendance areas, retirement programs for teachers and other school personnel, audio-visual aids, in-service education for teachers, and supervision of attendance. These are earmarks of educational progress and at the same time indices of the growing importance of the county superintendency.

Educational accomplishments by an individual, a school, a community, a county, or a state cannot be made without a proportionate expenditure of personal effort and financial resources. The law of compensation pointed out by Emerson many years ago is as applicable to the organization and administration of schools as it is to the physical aspects of life in which all mankind is submerged. Worth-while advantages cannot be had for nothing. Each educational opportunity that is provided by a school district must be balanced by a corresponding use of time and resources. In large local administrative units, this balancing of resources against opportunity is largely a matter of

choices and adjustments within the districts; but in sparsely settled areas where the resources of small districts are meager, new educational opportunities are, to an increasing extent, balanced in part by resources drawn from the intermediate district level. There is scarcely an adaptation made in formulae for distributing state school funds, in the organizational structure of local school systems, or in the broad aspects of the curriculum that is not reflected in some manner in the duties and responsibilities of the county superintendent's office. It is from this level of administration that much of the leadership, equipment, financial resources, and services come that are instrumental in making educational improvements in small rural school districts. Gradually, the character of the office is being reshaped as the functions of leadership and service assume more prominent roles.

This transition has not been characterized by a corresponding decrease in either the number or scope of duties and responsibilities that were delegated to the county superintendent's office in earlier years. Local district budgets must still be prepared and school funds properly accounted for; state departments of education continue to request up-to-the-minute information concerning school population, condition of school plants, per pupil expenditures, and educational accomplishments; and there is little indication that the administrative and instructional problems involving school boards, teachers, parents, and pupils which so often come to the county superintendent's office for discussion and decision are decreasing in number. As with almost every other functional unit of public education, the county superintendency tends to take on new responsibilities without sloughing off a proportionate number of the old. It is a process of growth and development rather than a mere shifting of position.

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

The supplementary educational services provided most frequently through county units and intermediate district units of school administration are:

1. Supervision of instruction
2. Pupil transportation
3. Circulation of audio-visual aids

4. Audiometer tests of hearing
5. Continuing school census
6. Psychological testing of pupils
7. Circulation of book collections
8. Home teaching of handicapped children
9. Dental clinics
10. Curriculum laboratory materials for teachers
11. Speech clinics
12. Bookmobile service.

The frequency with which these and other supplementary educational services are provided varies widely with the density of population and the predominating type of administrative organization. Supervision of instruction, pupil transportation, circulation of audio-visual aids, audiometer tests for hearing, and a continuing school census are the services which are most frequently provided in all types of districts. County units and large populous intermediate districts provide more services than sparsely settled intermediate units. Practically all county units provide pupil transportation, but less than one-third of the county units have well-established programs of psychological testing. Bookmobiles are increasing in number, but still only about one in fourteen intermediate districts has established this service. Unfortunately, it is in the sparsely settled counties, where a continuous distribution of up-to-date reading materials is, perhaps, most needed, that bookmobiles are less often found.

SPECIALIZATION IN ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

With the exception of pupil transportation, which has developed most extensively in sparsely settled areas, the number of services provided through the county superintendent's office increases with the density of population. This tendency reflects the problem that small intermediate districts and county units face in securing adequate personnel. Such services as psychological testing, identification and correction of speech defects, instruction of mentally slow learners, and curriculum laboratory services cannot be provided to a good advantage without some assistance from specialists in these fields. Furthermore,

the body of professional and technical information rapidly developing in such fields of service as pupil transportation, audio-visual aids, home instruction of physically handicapped children, and supervision of attendance requires continuous careful study on the part of people who have major responsibilities in these areas of the educational program. As in the fields of medicine, law, industrial management, and engineering, educational administration and supervision are passing from the era of the general practitioner to a period of specialization. This change is due in part to our efforts to provide for the greatest possible efficiency in the use of personnel and physical resources, and in part to scientific study and experimentation which have led to the development of bodies of technical information too great for a single individual to apply effectively.

The school system which provides a comprehensive educational program must have the services of such specialists available from some source. As society has placed more and more responsibility on the schools the need for high-quality educational leadership has increased. City school systems have taken the lead in responding to this need. From a study of practices in 185 city school systems in the population range of 20,000 to 50,000 made in 1929, McGinnis concluded that the minimum professional staff should consist of a general supervisor, a director of research, a supervisor of atypical classes, a supervisor for art, a supervisor for music, a supervisor for health, a supervisor for manual arts, a supervisor for household arts, and two supervisors for physical education. At this time, the average city in this population range in Massachusetts employed about eight supervisors of instruction, three nurses, an attendance officer, and three office employees who had major responsibilities in the administration of the school system.¹

During the more than two decades since this study was made, advances in teacher education have given classroom teachers a greater breadth of understanding and more competencies in many areas of the curriculum, but their need for professional assistance has not dimin-

¹ William C. McGinnis, *School Administrative and Supervisory Organizations in Cities of 20,000 to 50,000 Population*, Contributions to Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1929, No. 392, pp. 65-66.

ished. Quite to the contrary, it has increased as the curriculum has broadened and as the relationships between the growth and development of children and the technical fields of nutrition, psychiatry, psychology, and sociology have been more clearly recognized.

In city school systems and other types of relatively large administrative units, specialists are sometimes employed as members of the instructional staff in larger schools. More often they are employed as members of the superintendent's immediate professional staff. Thus, the superintendency becomes a constellation of the special abilities and interests of different staff members, each supporting and supplementing the other. In addition to serving in an advisory capacity to the superintendent on administrative and instructional problems, each staff member assumes major responsibility for developing the area of the educational program in his particular field of specialization.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES IN SMALL DISTRICTS

Small local school districts, which are common in rural areas, seldom have enough resources to provide the services of specialists. Consequently, the provisions made for psychological testing, speech correction, health education, guidance, audio-visual aids, and instruction in art and music have frequently lagged behind developments in city school systems. County-unit districts with larger budgets, centralized administration, and greater pupil population than rural community and neighborhood districts are rapidly moving to the forefront in developing such services as an integral part of the educational program.

In areas where the rural neighborhood and community still constitute the local district, special services are provided frequently through the intermediate district. Where the intermediate district organization is weak and people have failed to comprehend fully the advantages of pooled resources and shared services, the educational programs in many small school districts are meager, bare, and colorless. In situations where the potential of the intermediate district has been recognized to the extent of adequately staffing the county superintendent's office and providing a budget to develop a comprehensive program of supplementary services, educational opportunities equal or exceed the opportunities in many city school systems.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Meager financial resources and failure on the part of rural people to recognize fully the need for capable educational leadership at the intermediate district level have limited the employment of professional assistants to the county superintendents. However, there is wide variation in practice. About two out of five county superintendents have no full-time professional assistants. Usually, these are small, sparsely settled rural counties. In contrast, several large populous metropolitan counties have twenty or more highly qualified persons employed as full-time members of the county superintendent's staff.

A study made by the Department of Rural Education, NEA,² shows that the number of professional assistants to superintendents in the supervisory districts in New England and in New York State is somewhat less than the general average for the entire country. The 452 intermediate districts in these states in 1950 reported having a total of 107 professional assistants. The greater number of these were in Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

The 2009 county superintendents in the twenty-seven states in which the county is the intermediate district unit of school administration had 1769 full-time professional assistants, an average of a little less than one for each superintendent. There was much variation among the states. California, with fifty-eight county superintendents, had 395 professional assistants or an average of about seven for each intermediate district unit. In contrast, Nebraska, with ninety-three county superintendents, reported no professional assistants.³

One indication of need for professional leadership from the intermediate district level of school administration is the number of one-teacher school districts in operation. It is logical and reasonable to assume that the greater the number of teachers and board members who do not have the advantages of the advice and counsel of principals and local school superintendents, the greater the need would be for

² Shirley Cooper (ed.), *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, Yearbook of the NEA Department of Rural Education, Washington, D.C., 1950, Table A, pp. 175-176.

³ Francis S. Chase, *Rural Education Today*, University of Chicago, Chicago, 1951 (unpublished material).

professional leadership from the county superintendent's office. But strangely enough, this need seems to have but little relationship to the number of professional persons employed at the county intermediate district level. The 567 county superintendents in the six states having the largest number of one-teacher school districts in 1950 had 347 full-time professional assistants to the county superintendents. Almost half of the superintendents in these states had no professional assistants. In the six county intermediate states having the fewest one-teacher schools, the ratio of professional assistants to county superintendents was slightly higher.

TABLE 12. Number of Professional Staff Members Employed at the County Intermediate District Level in States Having the Largest and Smallest Number of One-Teacher Schools in 1950^a

	State	Number of One-Teacher Districts	Number of County Superin- tendents	Number of Pro- fessional Assistants
States with largest number of one-teacher schools	Iowa	4173	99	79
	Nebraska	4289	93	—
	Wisconsin	3956	72	125
	Minnesota	3948	87	32
	Missouri	3788	114	20
	Illinois	2370	102	91
	Total	22,524	567	347
States with smallest number of one-teacher schools ^b	Arizona	94	14	14
	New Jersey	58	21	61
	Idaho	191	44	20
	Washington	121	39	20
	Indiana	375	92	85
	Oregon	252	36	8
	Total	1091	246	208

^a Shirley Cooper (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 175-176; David T. Blose and William T. Jaracz, "State School Systems Statistical Summary for 1949-1950," *Statistical Circular*, U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C., June, 1952, Circular No. 344.

^b There are states with fewer one-teacher schools that are not organized as county intermediate districts.

In the twelve county-unit states in 1950, there were 910 county superintendents and 1444 professional assistants, a ratio of about 1.5 assistants to one superintendent. In Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia there were about three professional assistants for each county

superintendent. In North Carolina there were one hundred county superintendents and but three professional assistants in the entire state.

From the viewpoint of the country as a whole, the county superintendent's office in both the intermediate district and county-unit states is not adequately staffed. There are, however, some outstanding examples of situations in which county intermediate districts and county units have developed staffs of professional personnel that are able, capable, and efficient. They are attracting and holding some of the best educational leadership in the country and are, in effect, charting the course for the future development of county school administration. Examples of these situations illustrate the general character of these organizations and call attention to the broad principles governing their operation.

A LARGE INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT STAFF

San Diego County, California, is a large intermediate district composed of sixty-five local school districts that range in size from a one-teacher district with an average daily attendance of twelve children to a large unified district enrolling about 3000 pupils. The local districts outside the City of San Diego employ approximately 1700 teachers and have a total enrollment of about 40,000 pupils. Over a period of several years the independently organized and operating districts in the county have been brought together into a functional intermediate district that provides a wide range of educational services to supplement the programs of the local districts (see Figure 4).⁴

The county superintendent of schools in this county is appointed by a five-member popularly elected county board of education. His staff is composed of approximately fifty professional workers who have been carefully selected for the particular fields of service in which they work. Three broad groups of related educational services are provided by the personnel. These are *business services*, *special services*, and *curricular services*. The constellations of services in these general areas constitute the basis for the organization of the professional staff into three general administrative divisions.

The personnel in each of these broad service areas are headed by a

⁴ Shirley Cooper (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 133.

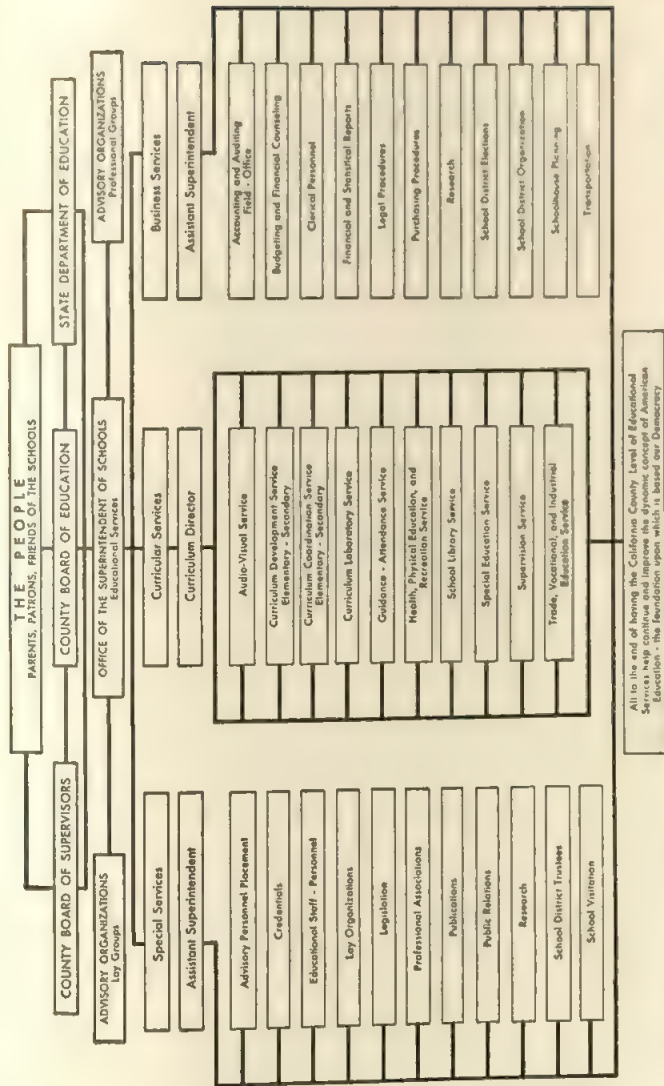


Figure 4. Educational Services Provided by a Large Intermediate District Staff, San Diego County, California. (Educational Services Chart, Office of the Superintendent of Schools, San Diego County, California.)

professional staff member who has the rank of an assistant superintendent and is directly responsible to the county superintendent. Both professional and clerical workers in each division are responsible to their respective assistant superintendents.

Business Services. The professional personnel in the division of business services include an assistant superintendent, a chief of business field service, a technical coordinator, and three accountants. The business services division is particularly helpful to small school districts. Upon request, assistance is provided to boards of education in planning annual school budgets, preparing financial and statistical reports, developing financial plans for school plant construction, and appraising school business procedures. This division provides such services as auditing district disbursements, assisting in the purchase of school equipment and supplies, advising on preliminary decisions relating to school district elections, and aiding local school district officials in the organization and development of school transportation programs. Other functions of the business services division include research on problems related to finance and providing technical assistance in the reorganization of local school districts.

Special Services. Building and maintaining public support for the schools and strengthening the internal relationships are the major functions of the division of special services in the San Diego County school system. In this division, first consideration is given to maintaining a two-way stream of free and easy communication between the schools and the general public. To accomplish these ends, special services personnel prepare news releases, radio announcements, and special programs. They speak at public school meetings, assist with bond campaigns and elections, and consult with local boards of education on educational problems. An advisory personnel placement service is operated to aid local boards of education in acquiring information about applicants and in appraising credentials. Bulletins, special pamphlets, and news letters dealing with various aspects of the educational program are published regularly and distributed widely throughout the county schools. The superintendent's annual report is one of the most important of these publications.

The personnel in this division regard school-community relations

as a two-way street. They are not content with informing the public about the schools. Efforts equally as great are made to assist citizens in informing the schools of their educational needs and interests. Through small neighborhood study groups, citizens advisory councils, school board associations, and parent-teacher organizations, lay citizens and professional school people work together for the improvement of public education. The personnel of the division of special services serve them as advisors and aid them by securing and making available factual information pertinent to the problems and issues under consideration.

The professional personnel in the division of special services include an assistant superintendent, a research coordinator, and an editorial coordinator.

Curricular Services. Curricular services is the largest and without doubt the most important division of the administrative organization in the San Diego County school system. This division is headed by a director of curricular services who has a position in the administrative organization comparable to an assistant superintendent. Working under his general direction, with appropriate administrative responsibilities delegated to leaders in major work areas, about forty professional staff members serve the local districts in the county.

The work of the division is divided into general areas which reflect the special competencies of personnel, the general character of resources used, and the type of services provided. To illustrate, one unit has major responsibilities for providing *guidance-attendance services*. Specialized personnel assist local school districts in developing their own guidance programs, and encourage the pooling of resources and sharing of services among small school districts. Seven schools for mentally slow learners have been established to serve the children in two or more districts that are too small to provide such services through their own efforts. In addition, the county operates a school in the county juvenile hall and a school camp for children who are under the surveillance of the juvenile court.

Rapid pupil-population increase in urban fringe communities and in smaller rural towns and neighborhoods makes it imperative that continuous attention be given to keeping the school census up to date

and to maintaining adequate attendance records. The program of guidance-attendance services is oriented from the viewpoint of helping the school understand the children's needs and aiding the children in taking full advantage of the opportunities the school offers, yet emphasis on the supervision of attendance in the traditional sense continues to be important.

Audio-visual services maintains a laboratory in which teachers, under the guidance and with the assistance of specialists in the field of audio-visual education, develop many kinds of instructional aids particularly adapted to use in their own classrooms. In addition, weekly deliveries of materials from an audio-visual library are made to schools throughout the county. The *curriculum service* center provides leadership and materials needed by teachers in both long-range and short-term programs of curriculum adjustment and improvement. *General and special supervisors*, who are commonly designated as coordinators, work directly with teachers in the classroom, with teachers in small study groups, and with formally and informally organized groups of parents on problems of instructional improvement. Bookmobiles operating on regularly scheduled routes supply the schools with reading materials from the *county school library* that are adapted to the needs and interests of children, teachers, and parents.

It must be pointed out that the San Diego County intermediate district is by no means a typical situation. There are few districts in the entire country that equal it in the number of professional workers employed or in the range of services provided. But its unusual features enhance rather than detract from its usefulness as an illustration in consideration of the professional staff of the county superintendent's office. It is a forward-looking program; it utilizes resources from federal, state, county, and local levels; it identifies and makes practical approaches to meeting a wide range of educational needs that are common in rural areas and suburban communities.

The professional staff is organized on a functional basis. The service to be provided or the job to be done is the predominant criterion in the selection of staff personnel and delegation of responsibilities. The staff and the program of educational services have developed simultaneously, each reflecting growth of the other. Unfortunately, this

principle has not always been followed in county school organization and administration. In many states legislative action or state board ruling attempts to shape the character of the county superintendent's staff on the basis of the number of teachers employed or other structural phenomena. Provision for the employment of assistant superintendents in West Virginia is but one of many examples that illustrate this practice. The law provides that the board shall not employ more than one assistant superintendent for every 200 teachers employed in the county school system except in counties where fifty or more Negro teachers are employed. In such counties the board is entitled to employ a Negro assistant superintendent.⁵ Under the provisions of this legislation the number of teachers employed and the racial characteristics of the population rather than services to be rendered or functions to be performed govern the employment of these staff members.

Shaping the professional staff of the county superintendent's office in San Diego County has been a local responsibility. Local school administrators, teachers, school board members, and parents have shared in the planning. A personnel policies commission composed of nine representative school district administrators advises with the county superintendent in selecting staff personnel to provide the services the administrators want in their district from the county office. This democratic method of selection has given an added feeling of security to new staff members and aided materially in identifying capable people. Extension of the program of services has been based on recommendations of the county teachers' associations and requests of local school boards. A new service has not been added to the program unless the need for it has been well established and there has been a request for it by the people to be served. This has been the underlying basis of the development of the professional staff in the county superintendent's office.

A SMALLER INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT STAFF

The professional staff of the county superintendent of schools in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, consists of two full-time assistant super-

⁵ W. W. Trent, *The School Laws of West Virginia*, State Department of Education, Charleston, 1947, p. 34.

intendents whose major responsibility is supervision of instruction, a full-time supervisor of special education, a full-time reading consultant, a half-time speech correctionist, a part-time supervisor of home-making education, a part-time supervisor of vocational education, and a part-time supervisor of sight saving. The part-time vocational personnel are specialists who are employed by the state and assigned to particular counties. In this instance, their services are shared by another county; but while they are at work in Bucks County, they work as staff members of the county superintendent's office with an organizational relationship that is comparable to that of the assistant superintendents.

The reading consultant, who incidentally began his work in September, 1952, received his doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania at the end of that summer session. He has been employed by the county board upon authorization of the local district school boards in the county. Each school board contributes to his salary on the basis of 35 cents per pupil enrolled for that service.

While he diagnoses reading difficulties and assists teachers in working with them, he is directly concerned with the entire reading program and problems for grades 1-12. He has conducted basic courses in reading, refresher courses, and courses for teachers desiring to specialize in that area.

The speech correctionist has similarly diagnosed speech problems and worked with teachers and parents in a corrective program. Her services are provided for from funds contributed by districts independent of the county superintendent's office but who have used the services of the county staff.

The supervisor of sight saving is provided for from funds of the County Society for the Prevention of Blindness. In addition, the county board provides special consultants for all building clinics, as all building plans are first submitted to a clinic before securing county board approval.

Each professional staff member is directly responsible to the county superintendent. Since the provision of services rather than the exercise of administrative controls is the major responsibility of the staff members, the organization emphasizes coordination of effort and teamwork

rather than sharply defined areas of responsibility. The particular competencies of each individual rather than structural organization tend to determine the fields of activity.

Over a period of several years, the professional staff in this county has worked on the basis of responding to calls for assistance by principals and teachers rather than attempting to impose services on local districts that were not fully understood or sincerely wanted. Operation on this basis has made it essential that each staff member have competencies that command the confidence and respect of school people throughout the county. Staff members have had to be recognized as educational leaders in their own right rather than as persons occupying leadership positions. They have had to have something to offer that teachers and principals in the local districts really want and feel themselves fortunate to get. With such a professional atmosphere of attitudes and relationships, the friction and petty jealousies which sometime exist between the county superintendent's office and local district superintendents have not been in evidence.

There are many indications that the members of the professional staff in Bucks County have enjoyed such professional leadership status. Of most importance, there has been a greater demand for their services than they could meet, and over the years there has been a consistent trend toward demands for higher-level services—from demonstration to planning, from testing to child study, and from teacher institutes to workshops and long-range curriculum improvement. But there are other indications of the leadership position of the members of this professional staff. There is much demand for their services as consultants on educational problems throughout the state as well as in other states and foreign countries. Two members of the staff have served on the educational commission in Japan. They have been called upon to teach during summer sessions in colleges and universities. They have contributed to state and national professional magazines and written textbooks that have claimed national recognition. And they have served the districts in the county in a manner that has contributed much to continuous improvement of public education at every level.

The most important functions of the county superintendent and county board of education in an intermediate district such as this are

to secure professional staff members who are truly educational leaders, to maintain a situation in which they can work effectively, and to provide opportunities for their continuous professional growth. No greater service can be rendered by a county superintendent than to bring rural teachers into frequent contact with stimulating educational leadership in situations in which there can be sympathetic understanding of the abilities and limitations of teachers and opportunities for growth.

The finances for the employment and travel expenses of the professional staff of the county superintendent's office in Bucks County, as well as in other Pennsylvania counties, are received from state sources. The state law provides that every county in which there are more than one hundred teachers employed is entitled to one assistant superintendent. Larger counties are entitled to more than one assistant superintendent. Assistant superintendents are appointed by the board of county school directors on nomination of the county superintendent. Minimum salaries are set by law, but the county board of school directors may increase the salaries of assistant superintendents and supervisors of special education by authorizing additional payment out of state school funds apportioned to the local districts over which the county superintendent has supervision.⁶

Travel expenses are paid from funds allocated to the county for this purpose by the state superintendent of public instruction. Actual travel expenses are paid, but an average of \$675 per staff member is used as the basis for preparing annual travel budgets.

Special education supervisors are employed to assist teachers in the local districts in meeting the exceptional needs of physically handicapped, mentally retarded, specially gifted, and other types of atypical children. They are employed by the county board of school directors in the same manner as assistant superintendents. They bring to the staff special competencies in child psychology and special knowledge of procedures and techniques for working effectively with children who have unusual needs. Since the needs of exceptional children in small school districts usually must be met by the classroom teachers,

⁶ Francis B. Hass, *School Laws of Pennsylvania*, Pennsylvania State Department of Public Instruction, Harrisburg, 1949, pp. 128-132.

their work is closely identified with the work of the assistant superintendents who are supervisors of instruction. As they help teachers to become more sensitive to the needs of atypical children, they are at the same time strengthening the instructional program for all children.

Supervisors of homemaking and vocational education are assigned to the county by the state supervisor of vocational education. Except in larger counties, each of these supervisors serves the schools in two or more counties. Their salaries are paid by the state, but their work in a particular county is under the general direction of the county superintendent.

A LARGE COUNTY-UNIT DISTRICT

Public education in Arlington County, Virginia, is organized and administered as a county unit of school administration. The boundary lines of the local school district are identical to the boundary lines of the civil county. Responsibility for the operation of each and all of the forty schools in this county district has been placed on a five-member popularly elected board of education. The board of education formulates policies and makes decisions that translate the educational interests and desires of the people, insofar as they can be accurately interpreted, into a functional educational program.

Educational policy is seldom formed in abstraction. It takes form as decisions are made and action is authorized in regard to tangible problems and live issues related to the operation of a school system. Educational policy comes into existence and is reflected by the decisions made in planning the budget, appointing personnel, forming salary schedules, determining the broad outlines of the educational offerings, selecting school sites, constructing and equipping school plants, and establishing principles and procedures of school-public relations. Actual responsibility for planning, organizing, and operating the schools is delegated by the board to the school superintendent, who acts as chief executive officer of the board.

Arlington County is a relatively large county school district. Approximately 16,000 children are enrolled in the elementary and secondary grades. Almost 700 teachers, principals, and supervisors

are required to provide instructional services. In addition, 350 noninstructional persons are employed to provide plant operational services and clerical assistance in administrative offices.

The many and varied functions of the county superintendent's office in a county unit of school administration can be classified roughly into six broad categories: (1) supervision of instruction, (2) personnel relations, (3) business management, (4) plant operation and maintenance, (5) provision of new plant facilities, and (6) school-public relations.⁷

DIVISIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

The superintendent of the Arlington County school district in 1950 had twenty-four professional staff members to assist in the performance of these functions. For administrative purposes, the staff is organized into three broad divisions. These are instruction, business management, and personnel relations. Each division is headed by an assistant superintendent who is directly responsible to the superintendent. In addition, there is an administrative assistant, directly responsible to the superintendent, who aids in handling routine administrative problems.

Instruction. The division of instruction has general responsibility for organizing, planning, coordinating, and evaluating the instructional program. The assistant superintendent in charge of this division has to assist him eighteen supervisors and specialists, who function as staff officers rather than as line officers. Rather than attempting to develop a single pattern of education and impose it alike on all schools, the personnel in this division work with building principals and teachers to assist in developing the best educational program possible in each school. As a result of their experience, of general observations, and of formally organized studies they aid in planning, coordinating, and evaluating the educational program.

Services made available to all schools in the county through the division of instruction include:

1. A teaching materials center which provides educational motion picture slides, filmstrips, sound recordings, mounted pictures, and kits of mate-

⁷ W. A. Early, *Teachers' Handbook*, Arlington County Public Schools, Arlington, 1950.

rials on special subjects. Provisions are made for delivering these materials promptly to schools when requested by telephone or written requisition.

2. A speech specialist who assists classroom teachers in planning programs for the speech improvement of all children, special opportunities for children with unusual speech abilities, and remedial work for children with speech defects.
3. Homebound instruction for children who are unable to attend regular day school because of physical disability or prolonged illness.
4. Visiting teacher service to assist pupils who are having unusual difficulties because of lack of understanding and coöperation between the home and the school.
5. Services of a school psychologist who makes individual case studies of pupils referred to this office by parents, family physicians, classroom teachers, supervisory staff members, or visiting teachers.
6. A full-time school physician.
7. A full-time school dentist.
8. A staff of seven school nurses.

Business Management. The division of business management in the administrative organization of the Arlington County public schools is responsible for the disbursement and accountancy of all school funds, the purchase of supplies and equipment, the operation and maintenance of school plants, the construction of new buildings, and the transportation of pupils to and from school. Very few of the employees in this division are certified in the sense that teachers, principals, and supervisors are certified, but many of them must be highly skilled and technically competent. It is they who have prime responsibility for maintaining conditions under which the instructional staff can work effectively. The number of workers involved in the performance of different functions is so great that administrative responsibilities are delegated to a number of staff members. For example, there is a superintendent of buildings and grounds, a supervisor of custodial services, a supervisor of cafeteria services, and a supervisor of maintenance workers. The construction of new plants is handled on a contractual basis, but the division is responsible for maintaining effective working relations with architects and contractors.

Personnel Relations. Procurement of staff members and maintain-

ing good professional relationships are the responsibilities of the division of personnel relations. The assistant superintendent in charge of this division interviews all applicants for positions; works with committees of teachers, principals, and laymen in developing salary schedules; is responsible for the development of professional requirements for various types of positions; and sees that the credentials of all professional personnel meet state and local district requirements.

Principals of the local schools coöperate in the employment of staff members. Each applicant must be interviewed by the principal of the school in which the vacancy exists and must have his approval before recommendations for employment are made to the board of education by the county superintendent's office.

SCHOOL-PUBLIC RELATIONS

School-public relations is a responsibility of all staff members in the Arlington County school system. A three-member advisory committee has been set up by the board for each school. These are not mere perfunctory committees. They meet regularly in local communities in the study of pertinent educational problems and at appropriate times with the board of education to acquaint board members with educational needs and interests of the people in their schools. In describing functions of these committees, the superintendent said, "They serve as the eyes and ears of the board."

Each three-member committee serves as a nucleus to a much larger local school study group of citizens. These groups assemble information and make recommendations on steps to alleviate overcrowded building conditions, plan new school plants, plan playground layouts, promote school bond elections, and seek ways and means to improve library facilities.

In addition to the local advisory committees there are about fifteen countywide exploratory committees which include both laymen and professional school people. These committees study the present offerings and make recommendations for improving the educational program in such areas as vocational education, physical education, health education, recreation, and music. Staff members who have special

competencies in the area being considered accept responsibility for working with these committees in a consultative capacity.

A SMALL COUNTY UNIT

In the relatively small county-unit district of Giles County, Virginia, a small staff of capable professional employees working under the general direction of the county superintendent has developed a forward-looking program of education in a typical rural county of the southern Appalachian Highlands. The Giles County school district includes an area of approximately 369 square miles which is identical to the area of the civil county. The total enrollment in the nineteen schools in this county-unit district is a little less than 5000 children.

The school system operates under the general control of a five-member board of education that is appointed by the school trustee electoral board, which is in turn appointed by the circuit court. The county superintendent is appointed by the board of education and serves as its chief executive officer. All staff members are appointed by the board on the recommendation of the county superintendent.

The professional staff of the county superintendent's office includes a director of instruction, who acts in the capacity of an assistant superintendent; a supervisor of instruction, who works directly with classroom teachers on problems of instruction; a visiting teacher, who is responsible for supervision of attendance; an itinerant band instructor, who actually teaches in several different schools in the county district; and a county librarian. Nonprofessional personnel include the supervisor of transportation, the bus drivers, the building mechanic and his crew of workmen, and the secretarial assistants in the superintendent's office.

The professional staff in this county is not large enough to permit much specialization of function. Each staff member assumes a wide range of responsibilities and frequently reaches out into the community to nearby colleges and universities and to the state department of education to secure technical information and to enlist special leadership competencies to supplement his own efforts. To cite but one example, many of the health education services are provided through

the coöperation of the schools with the public health unit which serves Giles County, a small city in the area, and a neighboring county. The health unit provides inoculations, vaccinations, and chest x-rays. The sanitarian from the health unit inspects lunchrooms, sewage disposal, and water supply. Preschool clinics are held through the coöperation of the health unit and local physicians with teachers and principals.

TEN-MONTH PROGRAM

The leadership abilities and special competencies of teachers and principals are enlisted in programs which extend the services of the school into community life. In Giles County, teachers, at their own option, may be employed on a ten-month basis. During the extra month they give leadership to a program of extended services based on the interests and needs of children who voluntarily attend. In general, this program consists of recreational activities, supervised play, and such academic work as is requested. Frequently, this work is carried on in churches and homes. Children of nursery school and kindergarten age are admitted to this program.⁸

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S WORK IN A SMALL UNIT

In small county-unit districts the superintendent usually assumes a larger measure of direct responsibility for personnel relationships, for school-community relations, and for business management than the superintendent of a larger local district or an intermediate district.

Business Manager. Acting in the capacity of a business manager, the superintendent of the small administrative unit:

1. Prepares, justifies to the community and to the state if a relatively large part of the money for support of the schools comes from state sources, and administers the school budget.
2. Maintains complete records of the ownership, location, and condition of school property.
3. Supervises the operation and maintenance of buildings.
4. Prepares and executes, subject to the approval of the board, business contracts.

⁸ John E. Brewton, *Giles County, Virginia, Public Schools*, Division of Surveys and Field Services, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, 1948, p. 5.

5. Develops specifications and procedures for purchasing supplies, equipment, and services. In accordance with general policies adopted by the board, he acts as a purchasing agent.
6. Maintains a system of bookkeeping, with the aid of a clerical staff, which provides for an accurate accounting of school funds and permits efficient administration.
7. Prepares monthly and annual financial statements which are presented to the board.
8. Keeps an up-to-date appraisal of the value of school property and sees that it is adequately covered by insurance.
9. Supervises a program of school transportation.

Frequently, these services are performed without adequate clerical assistance, so that much of the routine work is actually done by the superintendent. This is neither good professional practice nor an economical way to operate a school system. The staff of clerical workers should be large enough, even in small school districts, to relieve the superintendent of the detailed work involved in the performance of these functions.

School-Public Relations. The superintendent's responsibility for school-public relations in a small rural county is usually heavy. Since he is personally known by a large majority of the people in the school district, they look directly to him for interpretation of school policy, for clarification of questions pertaining to school law, and for information concerning almost every aspect of the educational program. Even if well-informed persons are available in the school system, it is difficult to delegate these responsibilities. Many people who have problems and issues they want to discuss are not satisfied with talking to anyone except the superintendent. To avoid seeing them, even though the problems may seem to be trivial, is to encourage the idea that the superintendent is snobbish, feels himself overly important, or is operating on an "inner-chamber" rather than an "open-door" policy. Such mistaken ideas, once they are formed, quickly spread through the face-to-face relations in a rural district and may seriously hinder the effective operation of the schools.

In his public relations work, the superintendent of the small county-unit district tries to keep the public informed on the conditions of

school buildings and the needs for renovation and extension of plant facilities; he continuously points out the general accomplishments of the schools and calls attention to their limitations and shortcomings with a view to making improvements; he strives to maintain effective working relationships between the schools and other agencies of government. He is confronted by and must deal with problems arising from the location of transportation routes; operation of bus schedules; transfer of children from one attendance area to another; use of school buildings for public meetings, school drives, and campaigns; conflicts between school personnel and parents; coöperation with civic organizations; special assistance for children in indigent homes; and juvenile delinquency. These and other problems of a similar nature lie along the border of school-public relations. They are important to the people who are involved and cannot be ignored. When viewed with enough perspective they are indicative of changes that should be made in the educational program, but all too frequently the superintendent of the small school district and his assistants are so completely submerged in them that they fail to see their long-range significance in educational planning.

Much of the superintendent's public relations work is done in a direct and informal manner as he confers with parents and teachers individually and in small groups, serves as a representative of the schools on community committees, addresses group meetings, and meets citizens briefly at luncheon club meetings and on street corners. To rural people the superintendent is the symbol of their schools. It is scarcely too much to say that he is never off duty except when he is at home or out of the school district.

Personnel Relations. Recruitment, employment, and placement of school personnel are one of the most important responsibilities of the superintendent in the small county-unit district. Part of this responsibility is usually delegated to principals of schools in which teachers and noninstructional personnel work. It is good administrative practice to have principals interview applicants and make recommendations to the superintendent for employment. Certainly no person should be assigned to work in a school who does not meet the approval of the principal who is immediately responsible for her work. Final recom-

mentation to the board for employment should be made by the superintendent.

Maintaining a situation in which teachers and other school personnel have a sense of personal security and a feeling of being an important part of a school system that is doing a good job is an important part of the superintendent's work. To do effective work, teachers must be at ease in the classroom and in the community; they must respect and have confidence in their associates; they must feel free to express their opinions and viewpoints; and they must believe that what they are doing is really worth while. There must be opportunity to challenge their strongest capabilities and to prove their mettle.

Administration is a service activity supporting the function of instruction. "As a service activity, it is concerned with every aspect of the school operation and with all the instruments of that operation, including the personnel. The concern, implicit in many administrative activities, plainly supervisory or not in character, for the improvement of instruction leads inevitably to concern for the establishment of the proper relationships between teachers' positions and their whole living so that instruction will benefit."⁹ The superintendent is concerned with the whole life of the teacher. It is not that he wants to regulate it and direct it, but that he lends his support in every way possible to making her life in the community stimulating and satisfying.

DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY IN A SMALL DISTRICT

Students of school administration frequently lament the proportionately large amount of time superintendents in small school districts spend in dealing with routine matters and with problems only indirectly related to instruction. So much time and energy are consumed in this way that it is claimed there is insufficient time left to deal with the broad problems of school policy and instruction. These are undoubtedly accurate observations, but the suggestions commonly made for improving the situation usually become somewhat hazy and indefinite. These critics point out that such responsibilities should be

⁹ By permission from *The Administration of American Public Schools*, by Harlan L. Hagman. Copyright, 1951. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, p. 221.

delegated to subordinate staff members, forgetting that the superintendent in the small district has delegated responsibilities until every member of his limited staff is loaded down with pressing responsibilities. They suggest that additional professional and clerical staff members be employed, with but little thought given to the limitations imposed by state laws and meager budget. They discuss the importance of broad educational policy without giving attention to the processes through which community educational policy is formed.

The provisions of public services in rural areas, educational or other, tend to outdistance the employment of personnel to provide the services. Landis¹⁰ cites a situation in which one rural public welfare agency with a staff of three people operated seventeen different programs of services. Each of these staff members acted in the capacity of an administrator, a clerical worker, a case worker, a public relations official, and a specialist in a half-dozen fields of welfare activity. To say the least, such situations are not desirable. They reflect poor organization, poor use of personnel resources, and unsatisfactory services. Nevertheless, such conditions frequently exist in the formative stages of programs that serve rural people. They represent a stage in the process of growth and development.

Good organization facilitates school administration, but it is a mistake to believe that organization in and of itself will result in good school administration or that the organization and procedures that are effective in a large school district are equally well suited for the small school system. Depth of community understanding, sincerity of personal relations, and the quality of personal contacts continue to be vital factors in the successful administration of rural schools. Any procedure that ignores their importance is not well grounded.

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Classification of nonteaching positions which indicates the duties and qualifications for each class of position is a procedure in personnel administration commonly followed in larger school systems. This

¹⁰ Benson Y. Landis, *Rural Welfare Services*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1949, p. 25.

administrative device is most effective when classifications have been made by a committee composed of representatives of the staff working in conjunction with the superintendent. Frequently, lay citizens in the community who have had experience in personnel administration in industry or public service work with personnel classification committees in a consultative capacity.

Personnel classification in smaller school systems may be in many instances, because of the limited number of persons employed, a classification of positions rather than of classes of positions. Nevertheless, this is an effective administrative procedure in both small and large school systems. It provides a guide to the selection of personnel, is useful in establishing salary schedules and making promotions, and indicates the general areas of responsibility that are to be assumed by each staff member.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The professional and personal qualifications for staff personnel that are usually stated in position classification tend to be minimum requirements. For professional personnel they include educational background, appropriate professional experience, and the special skills and competencies required to provide the services the position is expected to offer. In many respects, however, filling key positions on the county superintendent's staff is a spot assignment. The right person must be selected for the job if the work is to be effective. Administrative organization, no matter how carefully it is formed, can never replace the personal factor in school administration. The underlying philosophy of the school, the type of professional service to be provided, the resources available, and the cultural climate in which the staff member will work must be pitted against the personal characteristics and attributes of the applicant for the position. There are many subjective factors in the total situation that can be appraised accurately only by one who is keenly sensitive to the personality traits of individuals as they are related to the functions of the position. Ability to weigh these factors and to make sound decisions is one of the most important attributes of a successful school administrator.

GENERAL PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

The most useful guiding principles for the selection of professional staff personnel have been derived from study of what people do and how they work on the job. Because of the wide variability of different staff members, only broad principles that are applicable in a general way to all classes of professional assistants to the county superintendents will be mentioned here.

1. Professional staff members are educational leaders. They are teachers of teachers, consultants to parents, and advisors to the superintendent and their professional colleagues.
2. Professional staff members are resource persons. They must be so well informed in their fields of specialization that they can make practical, down-to-earth suggestions on the spur of the moment to people who ask for help. To illustrate, a group of rural teachers in meeting prior to the opening of school asked the supervisor to teach them songs, poems, stories, and games for their children. During her work in the school later in the year she was asked by the teachers to help acquaint parents with children's physical defects and needs for correction, to help initiate choral reading, to help develop a science center in the classroom, to help administer and interpret reading tests, and to help plan a field trip for the children.
3. Professional staff members must be approachable. Much of their effectiveness is lost if teachers, principals, and parents are uncomfortable in their presence or hesitate to come to them for assistance.
4. Professional staff members must be able to command the respect and enjoy the confidence of the people with whom they work. This should not be a one-way relationship, regardless of whether the staff member is working toward the solution of an attendance problem with an illiterate parent or with a highly respected teacher on long-range curriculum planning. The personalities and viewpoints of all people with whom the professional staff member works should be respected. A superior-subordinate type of relationship is never present in effective educational leadership.
5. Professional staff members should have a knack for helping people help themselves. The provision of professional educational services is a guidance, growth-directing process rather than merely doing things for people at their request. It is teaching in an informal manner with a

high degree of motivation in the learner. There is pressure for correct answers and immediate action. Staff members must have patience and sympathetic understanding. What happens to the people involved in the process is frequently more important than the immediacy of a correct solution to a perplexing problem.

6. Professional staff members must have skills and technical know-how. The psychologist who lacks clinical experience is at a serious disadvantage in trying to help a high school pupil who is emotionally maladjusted. The purchasing agent who cannot form reliable judgments on the quality of school supplies or prepare a legal contractual agreement can assume only a limited range of responsibilities.
7. Professional staff members who serve rural areas must fit into the social and cultural life of the communities in which they work. A student of rural leadership points out the importance of this principle with an illustration of extension workers:

"Overdressed extension men and those whose social inclinations are too strong are contemptuously dismissed as 'tango experts.' A social butterfly working as a homemaking specialist was known as the 'Parisian Mannequin' and by other less complimentary names. Parents sent their girls to her with great reluctance, fearing that she might have a bad influence on them. On the other hand, one of the most successful extension workers observed by the author wrote poetry on rural subjects in his limited spare time and spent an occasional evening dancing in places of good repute. The local newspapers printed his poetry and the school children memorized and recited it with the approbation of the elders. In fact, peasants would remark with pride that their county agent could hold his own socially with any lawyer or socialite in the city where he made his headquarters."¹¹

8. Professional staff members must have courage to stand for their convictions and professional principles. The role of the educational leader is not always easy. Reëxamination of old practices and introduction of new concepts disturb those who would coast along in complacency. In their momentary insecurity they frequently strike out at the disturbing factor with fierce criticism and resentment. Change in practice tends to be resisted, even by those who sincerely want to make progress, because of the adjustments that are necessary. It is during these formative stages of improved practices that courageous leadership is most needed. The

¹¹ Edmund deS. Brunner and others, *Farmers of the World*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1945, p. 114.

staff member must be able to view these factors objectively, to rise above personality clashes and group pressures. Praise and criticism should be treated alike. Neither should cause him to waver from a course of action on sound professional principles.

SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF STAFF PERSONNEL

The superintendent has no more important task than that of selecting personnel. "Wisdom in organization and generosity in financing can never overcome a lack of quality in the individual men and women who do the work of the schools."¹² The school is judged by thinking people in terms of its effect on the lives of pupils, on adults, on community institutions, and on the life of the community as a whole. That effect is determined so largely by the competencies, viewpoints, and character of personnel that every appointment should be carefully weighed against what the school does and what the school ought to do for the people it serves.

In performing the important function of staff personnel selection, the superintendent is always confronted with the limited abilities of human beings to forecast the future performance of their fellow men, with the dangers and shortcomings of subjective judgment, and with the inadequacies of instruments available for predicting future behavior on an objective basis. It is not unusual for superintendents to be further hampered in their efforts to make sound decisions on staff personnel selection by community pressures, political pull, limited budgetary appropriations, and legal requirements. There are no neatly packaged bundles of directions for superintendents that will make all personnel appointments safe and certain, but the chances for sound decisions are much better if selection and appointment practices do not conflict with proven principles of personnel administration.

PRINCIPLES

1. All professional staff members should be appointed by the board of education upon the recommendation of the superintendent. The super-

¹² Hazel Davis, *Personnel Administration in Three Non-Teaching Services of the Public Schools*, Contributions to Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1939, No. 784, p. 153.

intendent should be responsible for determining eligibility and making selection of candidates.

2. Board members should avoid exercising personal influence in the selection of candidates to be recommended to the board for employment.
3. Place of residence should not be a limiting factor in the selection of personnel.
4. Candidates should be recommended for employment solely on the basis of fitness for the position.
5. The superintendent should seek the advice of members of his professional staff before recommendations for appointment are made. The position of the newly appointed staff member will be strengthened if the persons with whom he will be associated have shared in the interviews and approved the appointment.

PRACTICE

From a careful study of personnel administration in twelve major cities, Davis found that the following practices were commonly followed in the selection and appointment of professional personnel:

1. Persons giving promise of worth are sought for and encouraged to become applicants.
2. Candidates for all positions make applications in writing.
3. Candidates whose written applications show promise are interviewed by the superintendent or his representative and by one or more persons most familiar with the service to be rendered, as a basis for giving weight to personality and character in the final selection.
4. Mature and vigorous persons are selected, with extremes of youth and of age avoided.
5. Letters of reference are obtained and considered.
6. School, college, and special training-school records of applicants are examined.
7. Certification by accredited professional associations and by legally established professional bodies is verified for all technical and professional positions to which this procedure is applicable.
8. Written examinations are given when educational records offer inadequate basis of comparison on intellectual ability and training.
9. A physical examination is made by the school physician before applicant is recommended for appointment.¹³

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 161-169.

A TEAM OF PROFESSIONAL WORKERS

With adequate finance and careful selection, there is brought together in the county superintendent's office a staff of specialists. All of them are working for the common purpose of making the schools better—providing better educational opportunities for boys and girls and for men and women—but each one looks toward the achievement of this purpose from different viewpoints. Backgrounds of professional preparation and experience have been different. There are the business manager, supervisor of buildings and grounds, director of transportation, general supervisor, music supervisor, psychologist, supervisor of attendance, speech specialist, school nurse, director of vocational education, and others. Each expects to make his contribution from a different angle. Professional recognition and status are likely to be identified with accomplishments in particular fields of specialization.

How do they work together? Is there an atmosphere of professional competition and petty jealousy? Does each one act like a prima donna? Do they straddle horses and ride off in different directions? Or is there a spirit of mutual helpfulness and coördination of effort? Does the program as a whole take precedence over special interests and personal ambitions? Is there genuine teamwork? The alternative depends upon the leadership ability of the county superintendent. Does he comprehend the total situation fully enough to initiate a positive program of coöperative action before disorganizing tendencies begin to emerge and crystallize? Does he have sufficient understanding of the principles and techniques of group processes to establish and maintain a situation conducive to the development of a strong team spirit?

Superintendents who have been successful in developing a strong team spirit in their professional staff have conceived this to be one of their important functions and have worked at the job, not sporadically, but continuously. It is a job that calls for broad vision, keen insight into the factors influencing human behavior, and a genuinely sympathetic understanding of the abilities and shortcomings of individuals. It is a job that is never completed.

In school districts where professional staffs work together effectively as a team, communication between departments, divisions, and individual staff members is free and easy. Staff meetings are held regu-

larly. There is much group planning. The idea of what we can do receives more emphasis than what *I* can do or *you* can do. Some work projects are initiated which can be done better by all staff members together than by individuals working alone or in small groups. In many counties the entire staff meets in a camp or some other informal setting for a day or two each year to work together on long-range plans.

Staff members are made to feel secure. The superintendent has no cronies or inner-chamber councils. There is simple directness and frankness in considering problems and accomplishments of each individual; there is sympathetic help for those who falter; and there is fairness in the procedures which must, at times, be taken to prevent incurably incompetent persons from securing permanent status on the staff.

There is sharing in responsibility, work experience, and recognition for accomplishments. Everyone is given a chance to carry the ball when the appropriate touchdown play is called. The opinions and viewpoints of every staff member are carefully weighed and count in the development of action projects and in the formation of policies.

Special committees are appointed by the staff. When possible, group decisions replace decisions made by the superintendent or heads of administrative divisions acting alone.

Staff members are cognizant of the need for teamwork and of the difficulties involved in securing it. The superintendent makes no attempt to be subtle—to slip up on the staff—to secure a spirit of teamwork without the individual members knowing what is happening. The achievement of a team spirit is treated like any other professional problem. The superintendent and staff members work at it together. They take stock of their resources, attempt to identify blocks to effective teamwork, and try to provide channels through which teamwork can operate.

There is no teamwork without a game to play. It does not occur in abstraction or exist *per se* in the office of the county superintendent. It comes into reality in actual working situations—in the provision of educational services—in the day-to-day and month-to-month activities of staff members. To the individual staff member, teamwork may involve disassociating himself from his own role and trying to view the situation from the other fellow's point of view, transferring himself

from the giving to the receiving end, accepting the fact that there is more than one good way to do things, and passing the torch of leadership to another when his time comes to lead.

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CHAPTER X

Relationship of County Administrative Office Staff Members to Personnel in Local Schools

Whether it be in a county unit of administration or in an intermediate district type of organization, the superintendents, principals, and teachers in the local schools have responsibilities and rights which must be recognized and respected in the administrative process if schools are to operate in the most effective manner. At the same time, the administrative and instructional personnel in the local schools have a right to expect and to receive assistance from the county administrative office. There is no point in arguing over which area of responsibility is most essential. Both are important; both are integral parts of the organization for the support, control, and operation of public schools. When either fails to function properly, the other is weakened.

These areas of operation and control do not function in isolation. Like the cogwheels of a machine that has been momentarily out of gear, they come together in numerous aspects of operation and control. Employment of personnel, curriculum planning, preparation of budgets, apportionment of school funds, evaluation of pupil progress, scheduling of bus routes, and constructing new buildings are but a few examples of these points of contact. If administrative relationships are good, these two areas of operation and control come together with smoothness and precision that bring the full force of the strengths and attributes of both local and intermediate district organization to bear

on the educational program. But if they come together in an atmosphere of distrust, tension, and conflict, the gears do not properly mesh, resources are wasted, public confidence in the schools is weakened, and the all too meager educational opportunities of rural boys and girls are seriously impaired.

Proper balance in the administrative relationships between local and county school personnel is becoming a more and more important factor in school administration as intermediate district organizations become stronger and provide a wider range of educational services. Relationships that reflect confidence, respect, and a spirit of mutual helpfulness are essential to maintaining a high level of morale in the instructional staff, in making needed adaptations in the educational program because of varying local community conditions, and in keeping alive the spirit of experimentation and critical inquiry that is so important in keeping the schools on a positive, upward slant. It will be the purpose of this chapter to point out principles fundamental to these relationships and to illustrate the implementation of these principles with selected practices.

EDUCATIONAL CLIMATE

Good public education is not static. Neither is it a clearly defined combination of pupils and teachers with budgets, buildings, and books. These are but rough indices of the complex, interrelated processes of sharing and competing, of trial and error, of adaptation and adjustment, of forming opinions and shaping values, of probing a little farther each day into areas of the unknown as children and teachers live together, work together, and grow together. The spark that gives this process vivaciousness, vigor, and strength is a quality that grows out of the warm personal relationships between pupils, teachers, parents, supervisors, and administrators. It is a quality that good buildings, up-to-date equipment, and adequate finance can encourage and sustain but cannot replace.

There is an intangible quality about a good school which, for want of a better term, administrators, teachers, and pupils have referred to as school spirit. It is a quality that reflects the security, confidence, and faith that children and teachers have in their associations together; it

is a quality that reflects freedom to make choices, opportunities to test strengths, and chances to make honest errors without disastrous consequences; it is a quality which permits teachers and pupils to take defeat when it comes as an incentive to new and greater efforts; it is a quality which reflects the realities of the present, the hope of the future, and the sheer joy that youth receives from living in a healthful life-giving environment.

The good school spirit cannot be secured by legislative enactment, budgetary appropriation, or administrative directive. It is born out of free, frank, and fearless personal relationships. It thrives only when these relationships are well nurtured and carefully cultivated.

Favorable conditions for developing and sustaining a good school spirit are not wholly unlike what weather conditions and soil fertility are to a crop of corn. If the soil is fertile and the seed bed is well prepared, if moisture is sufficient and noxious weeds and the ravages of insects are kept under control, the chances for an abundant harvest are good. But if the soil is poor and rocky, if scant attention is given to the preparation of the seed bed, and if weeds are left to grow unbridled, the crop does not grow well and the harvest is meager.

The general climate in which school spirit grows and flourishes, or is starved and pinched to the slender margin of bare existence, is a climate of personal relations. It is a natural climate. It has in it the hopes, aspirations, and ideals of people of varying temperaments and capabilities as well as the jealousies, pettiness, and prejudices that seem almost to be an inherent part of human nature. It has in it many different concepts of essential and trivial, desirable and undesirable, good and bad, and right and wrong. It can be said that there is scarcely a beginning or an ending to the process which creates this climate. It is a continuous process which ebbs and flows like the tides. The professional staff of the county superintendent's office has no choice but to become a part of this process, but staff members do have a choice of the roles they will play and the points at which they will give additional emphasis or exert a restraining influence.

The spirit of a school district or of a county school system is manifested in a manner that is different from the manifestation of school spirit in an elementary or a secondary school, but it is nonetheless

noticeable and realistic. Even from casual observation, one quickly senses a situation in which professional and school-community relations are sound. Staff morale is high, public interest in the schools is keen, school leadership is respected, and educational issues are discussed on an objective rather than on an emotional basis. Things are happening. A general atmosphere of vigor and growth prevails. People are proud of being a part of a school system that they believe is good and is becoming better. There is no bickering over petty issues. The superintendent and his staff are not on the defensive. The torch of leadership is in their hands and they are moving ahead confident in the support of the community.

Unfortunately, not all school systems enjoy such psychological advantages. In far too many instances, the teachers and professional staff of the superintendent's office are insecure. There is an undercurrent of whispering in local districts and among the members of the instructional staff about employment, promotion, and dismissal. Suspicion, distrust, and jealousy rear their heads in unexpected places. Educational leadership is on the defensive with its back to the wall trying to explain the details of curriculum content, business management, and internal organization. Public interest in the schools is directed toward isolating and pinpointing unrelated factors in an effort to find something wrong with the schools rather than toward giving them constructive support.

EARMARKS OF UNSATISFACTORY RELATIONS

In a Western county where the schools have been severely jolted by unsatisfactory professional public relationships, the superintendent is the storm center of discontent. Parents claim they are not welcomed at the administration building, that they are given the "run-around" when they attempt to present problems at the superintendent's office, and that their suggestions are not wanted. The superintendent is accused of opposing coöperation between the schools, the Boy Scouts, and other social agencies. The Crippled Children's Association finds fault with the superintendent and board of education for not coöperating in the employment of a speech therapist. Civic groups claim they are being unjustly and illegally charged fees for the use of school buildings

for public meeting places. The local taxpayers' association has employed a special agent to conduct a study of school financial policies and procedures.

The three local newspapers are aggrieved because the board of education has purchased a Multilith machine that deprives them of profitable printing contracts. One administrator points out that the press stopped carrying school news directly after the purchase of the Multilith machine. Reporters and publishers claim that they are not given any school news and that the superintendent has advised staff members to stay away from the newspapers.

Principals express dissatisfaction with the system of requisitioning supplies. Women principals claim that men are given preferences in employment and promotion. Principals from smaller elementary schools claim that they have no part in policy discussion and formation. It is reported that the superintendent declared, "We give them no status; they have nothing to offer."

Teachers are dissatisfied with the system of rating teaching competency. They maintain that they have had no part in preparing the rating scale or in making the evaluation. Reports of teachers being dismissed without warning circulate freely. The superintendent is reported to have said in the presence of pupils, "Two-thirds of the teachers just sit and draw their pay." "Teachers are like so many eggs. You buy them at the market price." "The bookshelves are better than the teachers that use them."

There are many school systems that do not differ markedly from the one that has been briefly characterized. They have good plants, well-qualified teachers, adequate finance, a trained superintendent, and a community of citizens who have high educational ideals for their children. But these are not enough for a good school. The bond of personal relationship that gives these tangible factors a natural affinity for each other and stimulates them to effective functioning is faulty. The defects are reflected in bickering, promiscuously stated half-truths, and wild rumors. The low level to which this process sinks would be humorous if it were not for the serious injury inflicted upon the educational opportunities of children and impairment of the fabric of community life. Good schools cannot thrive in such a climate.

A MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY

Maintaining a social climate conducive to the development of rich educational opportunities is one of the most important functions of school administration. This the superintendent cannot do alone. "If there ever was a time when a school superintendent could do a one-man, lone-wolf job of operating a public school system, that day is past. Rather, he is the chief coördinator in a coöperative enterprise."¹ He has need for the unbiased support of the press and other agencies of communication in community life; he needs the wholehearted confidence of families, of social organizations, and of institutions; he needs the loyalty and coöperation of teachers, principals, and members of his immediate staff; he needs a close working partnership with the board of education; and he needs the frank open-minded viewpoints of youth. Together, they create the climate in which the school flourishes or ekes out a bare existence.

LIMITING CONDITIONS

There are limits within which parents, board members, and administrators must work in developing a favorable educational climate. These limits are set by the legal framework within which the schools are organized and operated, by local community consciousness and pride, by custom and tradition, and by prevailing concepts of what constitutes good practice. These factors may change substantially over relatively short periods of time, but they can never safely be ignored by any superintendent and they are, perhaps, of greater importance at the intermediate district level of administration than they are at the local district level.

One of the unique characteristics of the intermediate district is that it serves a number of distinctly recognized neighborhoods and communities with differing backgrounds of tradition and culture. The county superintendent's program of educational leadership and services must be adjusted to these individual school district and community

¹ C. C. Trillingham, *Growing Pains of Unification, A Study of the Public and Professional Relations Problems of the Plumas Unified School District*, California Teachers Association, State Ethics Commission, San Francisco, May 29, 1951 (mimeographed), p. 17.

differences much as the program of the good classroom teacher is adjusted to the varying capabilities and interests of individual pupils.

LOCAL CONTROL

Education control is a state function, but in actual practice responsibility for control of many of the most important aspects of public education has been delegated to local districts and is exercised by local boards of education directly or through an administrative officer.

There are different concepts of the meaning of control. In its most limited sense it connotes limiting, directing, guiding, and compelling. Indeed, these are important aspects of the control function; but as it is exercised by local boards of education and superintendents, control goes far beyond regulating action and weeding out undesirable practices. It initiates action, projects into the future, marshals resources, and focuses attention on purposes and objectives. At its best, it creates situations in which the abilities of people can be utilized at a high level of efficiency.

Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, is a typical situation insofar as the number of control centers with which the county superintendent works is concerned. It illustrates the complex problem confronting the county superintendent and his staff of maintaining sound, workable, professional relationships with local boards of education and professional personnel.

The schools of Milwaukee County are operated by sixty-seven local school districts of two general types—common school districts and city districts. Common school districts operate under the general supervision and direction of the county superintendent. Financial and general reports are made directly to his office. City school districts operate with a much greater degree of independence from the county superintendent's office.

COMMON SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Each common school district prepares its own budget, holds an annual school meeting to levy necessary school taxes, and employs its own school personnel. The board of education of each district is responsible for the care, control, and management of school property.

A majority vote of the electors present at an annual school meeting is required to approve the annual budget or to authorize a bond issue.²

Fifty-eight common school districts, comprised largely of open-country township territory, provide only elementary education. They operate a total of 55 schools, employ 330 teachers, and have 174 board members who are chosen by the people to exercise control over the schools.

Four larger common school districts are comprised of villages that are clearly recognized communities which support their own local civil governments and community service agencies and institutions, such as fire departments, police officers, banks, churches, and stores. Each district operates both elementary and secondary schools. The total enrollment ranges from approximately 900 in the smallest village to about 2500 in the largest. The chief executive officer of the board in each district is a well-recognized educational leader. The number of teachers in these districts varies from 42 in the smallest to 127 in the largest. Each district is a strong, well-organized educational administrative unit with a deep-seated sense of community pride in its school system.

CITY DISTRICTS

The schools in each of the four suburban city districts in the county are operated under the control of a seven-member board of education. The board appoints a superintendent of schools as its chief executive officer, but in many respects it functions as an arm of the overall city government. The board determines school policy, shapes the program of instruction, employs personnel, and plans its budget, but the budget must be approved by the city council. Title to all school property is held by the city government and all school bonds are city obligations.

These are relatively large, well-organized administrative units with enrollments ranging from 1375 pupils in the smallest suburban district to well over 5000 in the largest. They are regarded as independent districts. The school law specifically states: "Cities which have a city superintendent of schools shall form no part of the county superintendent's district, shall bear no part of the expense connected with the

² Milwaukee County School Committee, *Your Schools*, a Plan by the Milwaukee County School Committee for Reorganizing School Districts in Milwaukee County, the Committee, Milwaukee, July, 1950, pp. 17-19.

office of the county superintendent of schools, and shall have no part in the determination of any question or matter connected with or arising out of said office, nor shall any elector or supervisor of such city have a voice therein."³ The tenor of this legal provision indicates that at the time the legislation was enacted considerable attention was given to the possibility of conflict between county and city school administrative organizations.

The relationships between the county superintendent's office and the city school districts are largely of a coöperative nature. However, the county does exercise a controlling influence in determining tuition rates for nonresident pupils and in fixing boundary lines of school districts. The countywide plan for local school district reorganization, affecting both rural and urban districts, under consideration at the present time was prepared and submitted by a county school committee working in close coöperation with the county superintendent.

The large district comprised of the City of Milwaukee, which operates almost 100 schools with an enrollment of approximately 68,000 children, is a special district. The administrative organization for this school system was created by special act of the legislature. The fifteen-member board of education is elected by popular vote and is directly responsible to the people. It is directly responsible for the control and operation of the schools. It is fiscally independent, with authority to levy taxes and plan and administer the school budget without city council approval.

It is in this complex pattern of school administration that the county superintendent is called upon to provide educational leadership. Stimulating, encouraging, and guiding local district officials are his first responsibility.

COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT

The county superintendent is elected for a four-year term of office by the electors of the towns and villages. He is charged by statute with the responsibilities of:

1. Providing educational leadership.
2. Visiting the schools under his administration when necessary.

³ John Callahan, *Laws of Wisconsin Relating to Public Education*, State Department of Public Instruction, Madison, 1938, p. 496.

3. Inquiring into matters relating to the course of study, textbooks in use, methods of instruction, and discipline in the schools.
4. Advising school boards and teachers as to their powers and duties.
5. Making all reports and investigations requested by the state superintendent.
6. Directing school boards to make alterations and repairs which in his opinion shall be necessary to the health, comfort, and progress of the pupils.
7. Holding annually one or more school board conventions for the purpose of consultation, advice, and instruction pertaining to the schools in the county.
8. Providing a countywide program of adult citizenship training.
9. Contracting with supervising teachers and teachers for special instruction of handicapped children.
10. Conducting teacher institutes and in-service education programs.⁴

Identified with County Government. The county superintendent is regarded as a professional school man, but the legal framework within which he works places him with and identifies him with the county civil government. His office is in the courthouse with other county officials; his salary is fixed and paid by the county board of supervisors; his travel and office expenses are paid by the county board of supervisors; he reports annually to the county board of supervisors the condition of the schools under his supervision.

Broad Discretionary Powers. For the most part, the laws governing the county superintendent's office are general. They encourage rather than restrict action. They delegate broad discretionary powers, allow for judgment formation, and provide opportunity for the exercise of initiative and adjustment to different types of circumstances. They are positive in nature. Provisions establishing norms against which performance is checked are definitely in the background of the legal framework of the county superintendent's office.

The criticism is frequently made, and, indeed, there is a widely accepted belief, that the county superintendent's work in most states is seriously inhibited by legal restrictions. Careful examination of the statutes pertaining to the county superintendent's office and study of outstanding examples of educational leadership at the intermediate

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 497-499.

district level reveal that this is rarely true. Such criticisms are usually based on the observation that laws do not put floors under programs; that they do not marshal educational resources; that they do not command and direct superintendents to perform specified functions. Generally speaking, such laws do not put a ceiling on programs. Leadership can be of as high a quality as the superintendent is able to exert; educational programs can expand and be enriched through a multiplicity of channels. There is no lid on vision, insight, and ingenuity. The initiative rests pretty largely with the superintendent. The office can be what he and the people with whom he works make it.

Review of situations in different states in which the intermediate district is a common form of school administration, or review of different intermediate districts within a particular state, would reveal variations in enrollments, in number of local districts served, in size of independent towns and cities, in methods of election to office, and in relationship to the state department of education. There would, of course, be considerable variation in the statutory provisions governing the office, but the basic factors influencing the relationships of the county superintendent's office to teachers and local boards of education would not differ greatly from those in Milwaukee County. In the great majority of instances:

1. There would be a number of well-recognized sociological communities in the intermediate district, each of which operates a school regarded as one of the most important institutions of community life.
2. The superintendent would be working with a number of local boards of education that jealously guard the right of local control.
3. Control of the budgets for operating the schools would be in the hands of boards of education that the superintendent serves for the most part only in an advisory capacity.
4. The superintendent would have but little direct responsibility for the employment, promotion, and, if necessary, dismissal of the teachers with whom he works in a supervisory capacity.
5. Enforcing minimum standards for buildings and equipment, transportation, certification of teachers, financial accounting, and programs of studies would be a responsibility of the superintendent's office.
6. The superintendent would be in a position as a liaison officer between the schools on the one hand and county, township, and municipal

government on the other. He would tend to be identified with county government rather than with local school government. He would be in the crosscurrents of political issues, community conflicts, and cultural adjustments insofar as education is concerned.

7. The financial resources available for carrying on a program of leadership and educational services through the county superintendent's office would be limited.
8. The services provided through the county superintendent would be regarded for the most part as regulatory and supplementary. From the local citizen's point of view, operation and control of public education would be considered a local district function. Any administrative measures or procedures which tend to shift responsibility to the intermediate district level would be regarded as an infringement on local control.
9. Superintendents of independent city school systems and of larger local districts under the control of the county superintendent would in many instances receive a higher salary and enjoy higher professional prestige than the county superintendent.
10. Public opinion would identify the county superintendent's responsibilities with the smaller rural districts in the county. If local school district reorganization, resulting in larger local administrative units, happened to be progressing rapidly in a particular state or county, it would not be unusual to hear the viewpoint expressed by conscientious, well-meaning citizens that there would be no need for a county superintendency after reorganization was completed.

PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Principles emerge from experiences in actual situations. They are not preconceived concepts of what ought to be or of what ought to happen, flavored by personal motive and philosophical viewpoint. They are crystallized statements of reality, born out of trial and error and firmed up by careful observation and appraisal. They are attached to the situation with the multiplicity of factors and relationships in process rather than to individuals. They are general to the extent that they are useful guides to decision and action in all comparable situations. Hence, to identify principles governing the professional relationships of the intermediate district superintendent and his immediate

staff to the personnel in local districts, one must look to the situation in which they function, to the common problems which they encounter, to the forces which facilitate or inhibit good working relationships, and to the practices and procedures which have time and time again proven to be successful.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE LAY PUBLIC

The relationships of teachers, principals, supervisors, and superintendents to each other cannot be separated entirely from their relationships with the board of education, with the parents of the children enrolled in the classroom, and with the general public. Indeed, it would not be wise to make such a differentiation if it were possible. The participation of laymen in school affairs through school board action, through decisions reached in annual school meetings, through action of county boards of supervisors and township governments, and their expressions of public opinion through the press and other forms of public communication are integral parts of the total situation from which principles of professional relationships must be derived.

The Local District a Unit of Social Organization. This is recognized by law and common practice as such. It is a social invention through which people may express their desires, pool their resources, and meet their first responsibilities for public education. It is close to the people; it is of the people; it is the people in action in the enterprise of public education. That a district is a poorly organized, inefficient unit of administration, as is the case in many instances, is beside the point. It is what exists in actual practice. It is held in high regard by the people comprising it. It bears primary responsibility for the education of the children in its area. The school district, whether it is large or small, rich or poor, strong or weak, is the ground floor—the point of orientation of professional and school-public relations.

The county superintendent may earnestly and ardently strive to abolish an inadequate local school district through reorganization, but he respects it as a unit of school government at all times. And as long as it continues to function he gives its professional employees, its board of education, its parents, and its pupils services equal to those provided for the strongest, most populous district in the county.

PUBLIC EDUCATION PRIMARILY A RESPONSIBILITY OF LAYMEN

The responsibilities of professional school people are delegated to them by laymen. Teachers, principals, and local superintendents are responsible first to the local districts which employ them. Their responsibilities and relationships to the intermediate district emerge from this point. Any part of the intermediate district program which brings teachers and administrators into conflict with local boards, or tends to alienate them from the people to whom they are first responsible, is not well grounded and may very well have negative results that outweigh its advantages. On the other hand, activities which bring teachers, administrators, school board members, and parents into a working partnership on a basis of mutual helpfulness and coöperation contribute to establishing a foundation on which good personnel relations can be developed.

An orientation program for new teachers just prior to the opening of school is a good beginning toward bringing parents, school board members, local administrators, and the county superintendent's office into a working partnership. Frequently, in a well-planned orientation program ministers, doctors, bankers, representatives from transportation agencies, policemen, local newspaper editors, the postmaster, and representatives from other public agencies and institutions to which the new teacher is likely to turn for services meet at the school in an informal situation that gives the new teachers an opportunity to become acquainted with the facilities available in the community. Teachers who have been on the staff in previous years assist the new teachers in becoming acquainted with routine teaching procedures, as well as with parents of the children who will be in their classrooms; ministers give them a warm invitation to take part in church activities; physicians acquaint them with health facilities available in the community; and the bankers invite them to open accounts in their institutions. Frequently, arrangements are made for a tour of the community. By the time the program is over the new teachers have gained some useful information and feel that the community is a friendly place.

By carefully planning such a friendly "get together" of parents and teachers the county superintendent has strengthened the position of

the new teacher in the community and has made a good beginning at laying the ground work for good professional relationships in the community educational program.

Sharing of Lay People in Countywide Educational Planning. One of the most distinctly recognized trends in public education in recent years is the increasing tendency for lay people to express concern for the schools and to take part in planning the broad aspects of the educational program. This trend is not something new. It is as old as the public schools themselves. In the very beginning of public education people came together in neighborhood and community groups to express their desires and to share their ideas in educational planning. It was in this manner that buildings were constructed, teachers were employed, and programs of studies were formed in the earliest schools.

After the public schools were well established there was a marked tendency for many years for the lay public to turn the job of educational planning over to the school boards they chose as their representatives and to the teachers and superintendent. The typical citizen seemed to feel that he had met his responsibility for public education when he paid his school taxes and complied with the rules and regulations adopted by the board in accordance with state school laws.

Now we are witnessing a rebirth of citizen interest and concern in the schools. To those who view this nationwide trend with but little perspective it may mean that the schools have fallen short of the full expectations of the lay public—that boards of education, superintendents, and teachers have not shown enough vision and foresight in long-range educational planning—that the lay public in general is dissatisfied with what the schools have accomplished. But to those who see the trend toward greater lay participation in educational planning from a broad viewpoint it proclaims a renewed faith on the part of the average lay citizen in public education—a fuller realization of the importance of the public school to life in a democracy; a desire to make the schools better in the future than they have been in the past; a will to give them renewed vitality by bringing the educational program into closer grips with the interests, needs, and capabilities as they fill their respective stations in community life.

Most lay participation in educational planning, as it is now develop-

ing, takes place at local community levels through parent-teacher associations, citizens' committees, advisory councils, and special study groups. This is as it should be, for it is the local community that carries major responsibility for public education. The county superintendent should encourage honest and sincere efforts of local citizens to share in their educational program. But such participation is not enough. The county superintendent needs to secure comparable participation of laymen in shaping educational policy and in developing educational plans at the intermediate district level.

To accomplish this some county superintendents have established county educational councils composed of representative lay citizens. These councils meet at regular intervals with the county superintendent and the county lay board to study educational problems and issues, and to make recommendations for the board and superintendent to consider in developing educational policy.

Some county superintendents have formed special committees that function on a short-term basis to assist with such specific problems as establishing a school camp, meeting the special needs of juvenile delinquents, or improving library service. Lay participation of either type has the dual advantages of keeping the board and superintendent sensitive to the needs and interests of lay citizens, and at the same time acquainting representative laymen with some of the intricate problems involved in the organization, support, and operation of a comprehensive educational program. It is through such mutual understanding and coöperation that the schools will become stronger.

Whatever type of committee is established, the county superintendent will do well to observe the following precautions:

1. Be sure the advisory committee understands that it has no legal functions—that its purpose is to advise.
2. Be sure that time limits are set for committee membership. Advisory committees should not become self-perpetuating organizations.
3. Be sure the membership fairly represents all important occupational and interest groups in the intermediate district.
4. Limit the size of the committee to avoid unwieldiness, yet make it large enough to be truly representative.

5. Do not attempt to make the committee a rubber-stamp group whose chief function is to approve preconceived plans.
6. Be sincere. There is no magic way to establish good working relationships with lay groups. Place issues frankly and clearly before them and treat honest opinions and suggestions with dignity and respect.
7. Make use of existing organizations. Usually it is not a good policy to create a new organization if one that already exists can do the job.⁵

Keeping Local Boards Well Informed. Whether the county superintendent's staff works with a half-dozen or a half-hundred local school districts, it is essential that local boards be kept well informed regarding the purposes and activities of the intermediate district program and with the laws and regulations pertaining to the operation of schools in the local districts. It is the decisions made and the action taken by local boards that give shape and character to the most important aspects of the educational program. Unless local boards are well acquainted with the resources available from the county superintendent's office, with the services offered, and with the broad purposes of the intermediate district program, they have but little chance to coördinate their efforts with the efforts of the county superintendent's office. Lack of clear understanding is one of the most frequent causes of poor working relationships between the county superintendent's office and local district boards.

Several devices have proved to be helpful in maintaining lines of communication between local boards of education and the intermediate district. In Wisconsin one-day institutes for local boards of education are held in each county each year. These institutes are planned by the county superintendent, but he is assisted by specialists from the state department of education, the state department of health, the department of public safety, and colleges and universities. In these institutes major attention is given to problems raised by board members. These problems frequently are related to the qualifications and salaries of teachers, to equipment, to instructional materials, to transportation, to kindergartens, to transfers and tuition, to finance, and to such broad aspects of

⁵ Adapted from American Association of School Administrators, *Lay Advisory Committees*, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1951, p. 19.

the curriculum as health education, conservation of natural resources, and vocational education.

Many county superintendents follow the practice of issuing at regular intervals a school bulletin which deals with current problems and issues. Nothing, however, can take the place of personal contacts with local school boards. The successful county superintendent takes advantage of every opportunity that is possible to confer with local boards about their problems and to enlist their aid in support for countywide aspects of the educational program. Whatever method or methods are used for maintaining communication between the intermediate district level of administration and local boards of education must be continuous. This is one phase of the county superintendent's work that is never finished.

Veto of General Educational Policy as a Power of Lay Boards. Just as the local district has primary responsibility for public education within its limits, so does the intermediate district have a measure of responsibility for the education of all children and adults living within its area. Its policies and standards are developed with a view to all areas of the county. It does not seek to impose uniformity, but it is responsible for maintaining minimum standards of facilities and performance. When situations arise in which a particular district fails to meet these standards, it is the board that is primarily responsible and not the individual teachers and the superintendent. If undesirable conditions exist due to the limitation of unsatisfactory performance of individual teachers or of the local superintendent, the local board has the responsibility for making the necessary corrections.

In some instances, the action of local boards must be vetoed by the intermediate district. This should be an action of the intermediate district board. When the county superintendent performs this function he should be acting in behalf of the board rather than as an individual professional school officer. It is contrary to sound professional relationships for a professional school officer to exercise veto power over a lay board.⁶

The county superintendent in most states does not have a county

⁶ Charles H. Judd and others, *Administration and Supervision, Rural School Survey of New York State*, Ithaca, 1923, p. 360.

board of education as such. Since they do not have such boards, superintendents tend to act in behalf of the county board of supervisors or county court, which is the lay governing body for all county government. In theory, at least, the county superintendent should act as the board's professional officer in all matters pertaining to public school education. When situations develop, as they occasionally do, where local boards must be forced to comply with minimum standards, they should recognize that they are being coerced not by the county superintendent but by the will of a majority of the people in the intermediate district.⁷

To those who are actually engaged in county school administration and must make many decisions each day with promptness, this may seem to be straining a point or carrying a principle of administrative theory beyond the bounds of practical operation. But it is most important that the superintendent does not establish a position for himself as the center from which all blessings flow and all evils emerge. To the contrary, he and all members of his staff should serve in the capacity of professional school people working in behalf of the lay public.

Power of Coercion Used Sparingly. Coercive measures with school boards and with professional school people should be used only as a last resort. The county superintendent and members of his professional staff should lead rather than push. Their efforts should be directed toward helping people envision what good schools ought to be and do, creating a will to follow good practices and to have good schools, and bringing energies into effective use toward achieving desirable ends.

When practices in a school district, in a school, or in a particular classroom fall short of expectations the situation should be viewed first as an indication that the county superintendent's leadership has not been as effective as it might have; that there is need for a new appraisal of the situation or a different approach to the exercise of leadership. It may very well be that the goals established are too high to be reached under existing circumstances. It is not a condition that can be improved by calling names and fixing blames too hurriedly.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 387.

Failure is usually a result of the composite reaction of a number of factors in a particular situation.

The county superintendent and members of his staff will do well to work under the assumption that communities of people and individual teachers and principles do not want to fail—do not want to show up badly in comparison with their peers. There may be exceptional cases colored by badly warped viewpoints, deep-seated prejudices, and strong selfish interests in which studied effort is made to block educational progress or in which low-quality performance is due to sheer laziness, negligence, and indifference; but in general people do about the best they can under existing conditions in light of their present understanding. If they make improvements they must clearly see the improvements needed, want to make the improvements, know how to make the improvements, and be able to muster the resources needed to make the improvements. These conditions are essential to educational progress in a school district and to the maintenance of sound professional relations.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

Maintaining good working relationships between the county superintendent's office and laymen in the local district, even with all of its importance, can do little more than lay the ground work and create a favorable situation for good relationships between the professional employees of the local district and the intermediate district personnel. Teaching and learning, measurement and evaluation, planning and organization, counseling and supervising; financing buildings, equipment, materials; reporting pupil progress, in-service education, special educational services, child study groups—these are areas of activity that claim the attention and consume the energies of professional school people. These are the sources from which most educational problems that bring the staff members of the local and intermediate district together emerge. A school system in operation—the business of guiding pupils as they grow and learn, the practical workday world of teachers—these are the points of contact between the professional staff members of the local and intermediate district levels of administration. These are the points at which tensions may arise in the absence of sym-

pathetic understanding; these are the points from which sound principles of professional relationship emerge from the acid tests of actual practice.

Communications Channeled Through Executive Officer of Local Board. The superintendent or principal is the first point of contact for the county superintendent or members of his staff with local districts. No action of an intermediate district staff member could be more disturbing to the smooth operation of a local school system or to the prestige of the local superintendent than to by-pass the professional executive officer of the local board. Recommendations, suggested procedures, and criticisms from the intermediate district are presented to the superintendent or principal. He in turn makes such decisions and follows such courses of action in considering these recommendations with board members or with the instructional staff as local policy demands. In small one-teacher districts where no professional school person has been delegated executive responsibilities, communications from the intermediate district are directed to the local board as a whole or to the president of the board.

In most states, the county superintendent and members of his staff are charged specifically by law to visit and inspect the local schools and to supervise classroom instruction. Such mandates unquestionably empower county superintendents and county supervisors to go directly into the classroom of local districts without the approval of the local superintendent or principal. Common courtesy and good ethical practice require, however, that contact with the superintendent should be the initial step in developing any program of supervision and that he should be kept informed of all major developments.

The county superintendent and supervisors in many intermediate districts work on the basis of making their services available on a request basis. This has proven to be a highly successful approach to the provision of high-quality supervisory services and eliminates the possibility of friction through misunderstanding.

Immediate Problems as Starting Point. It is difficult for even the most professionally minded local superintendent to become highly interested in aspects of an educational program that are clearly beyond the reach of the local district, or to be much concerned about educa-

tional theory that has little or no relationship to the most pressing educational problems before him. If the school is operating in the face of an apathetic or hostile public opinion or if there is an inadequate budget, an overcrowded building, a difficult transportation problem, a high pupil dropout rate, or a narrow traditional curriculum that the superintendent and teachers clearly recognize needs to be improved, these are the points at which leadership from the county superintendent's office should begin.

The individual teacher who feels herself incompetent to teach music, who is having difficulty with classroom discipline, or who wants to organize a new unit of work in social studies welcomes and is eager to receive any worth-while assistance she can get. The skillful supervisor begins by helping her meet the situation that exists. Perhaps the most serious criticism that is made of the county superintendent's office is that it does not give real help at the points where it is needed. Far too often the program of county leadership is only vaguely related to the program actually in operation in the local districts.

In many instances teachers and administrators in local districts may not be able to recognize and clearly define problems that are causing them difficulty. They are too close to them. They do not have enough perspective to appraise accurately their own positions in the school system. They have had but little opportunity to observe comparable situations in other schools. In such instances those who would give assistance must first help to identify and define the problem. Sometimes this can be accomplished by bluntly and forthrightly pointing out the difficulty. More often it can be done more effectively by helping the personnel in the local districts to analyze the situation carefully themselves.

The program of leadership and services from the county superintendent's office is by no means all devoted to the solution of difficult or critical problems. If such were the case it would be much like aiding a tired swimmer to keep his head above water just a little longer or aiding a family on a marginal farm to maintain a subsistence level of living. Such assistance is of first importance, but there must be a time when a local school system is strong enough and an individual teacher has enough confidence in herself to go a little above and beyond mere

survival or look to something more than maintaining the status quo. These, too, are critical points for the exercise of educational leadership. A little encouragement—a bit of additional help, a clearer conception of the possibilities that lie ahead given at a strategic moment—is the spark needed to change mediocrity into superiority. Providing this spirit to forge ahead is more and more becoming the number one function of the county superintendent's office.

Full Use of Local Resources. There is no community life so barren, no individual teacher so incompetent, and no educational program so poor that there are no bright spots or latent possibilities. What the community has now and what the teachers do best are the most valuable educational resources the community has. Planning a program that will use them to the best possible advantage is the common-sense approach to educational improvement.

With leadership from the county superintendent's office, an unsightly eroded hillside near the school in a Southern community became a laboratory for the study of natural resources that involved teachers and pupils at every grade level and brought a large measure of vitality into every aspect of the curriculum of this small rural school. In a rural county in Kentucky, lay citizens have joined with the teachers and principals in developing a program of personal and vocational guidance that has claimed nationwide attention because of its excellence. A housewife in a New Mexico county who had some knowledge in pottery making was induced by a supervisor from the county superintendent's office to assist in developing, in a small rural school, a ceramics project that involved adults as well as the pupils. This project has not only given the people in the neighborhood an opportunity to develop their latent creative abilities but it has contributed considerably toward increasing family income through the sale of their products.

Examples of schools in which the educational program has been improved immensely through use of human and natural resources lying dormant in the community are numerous. Discovering them and bringing them into active use is one of the most useful contributions the county superintendent's office can make toward educational improvement in the local districts.

Time for Growth. County educational leadership should be based on long-range plans. It should expect improvement through gradual growth in understanding, change in method and adaptation, and in organization. Drastic changes that take place suddenly seriously disturb the work of pupils and teachers, are almost sure to be the results of plans and procedures imposed upon them, and are seldom more than half-heartedly accepted. Time and time again courses of studies have been written and handed to teachers which called for far-reaching changes in philosophical viewpoint and instructional method. They have done little more than frustrate teachers by making them feel guilty for not following procedures they do not understand and for which they have had no preparation. The net result more often than not has been less satisfactory teaching than before the course of study was written.

Sound procedures for educational improvement give teachers, administrators, and parents a chance to talk things over and to assume responsibility for what needs to be done. In this way the plan, whatever it is, becomes their plan; it has their support and any change in the program resulting from it is firmly grounded.

Sharing in planning not only gives people an opportunity to become thoroughly acquainted with what is being attempted but it brings into the foreground and takes into consideration underlying forces of community life that are not readily discerned by a nonresident. This principle of common consent and support for a common purpose is, perhaps, universally applicable to all types of communities of free people. Dr. Tannous illustrates its importance in a small village in Lebanon by the following example:

A wealthy emigrant returned to his native village . . . for a short visit. In good faith, he wanted to make a worth-while contribution to his community. He conceived the idea of a school, without stopping to consider that there must be reasons why the village had not previously had one. He contributed all the necessary funds, and a modern building was erected. He organized a committee to take charge in his absence, and promised to pay the teachers' salaries, so that all children might have free education. Then he left. The school ran for two years, during which many inevitable local factors, which hitherto had been ignored, asserted

themselves. The committee was split against itself, bickerings developed, and funds were abused. In the third year nothing was left of the project except the empty and neglected building.⁸

Provision for Flexibility. Any program of educational leadership from the county superintendent's office worthy of the name must have organization. There must be purposes and long-range objectives that are clearly recognized. Responsibilities of staff members must be fixed within broad limits and the program of activities must be in accordance with resources available. Attempts to operate on any other basis can be little more than sheer folly or gross stupidity. Such planning and organization, however, should not prohibit nor restrict making necessary adaptations to the situations in the different local districts.

The justification most frequently advanced for local control of education is that it gives opportunity for adaptation to local community needs and resources and encourages local initiative. The leadership services from the county superintendent's office need not be in conflict with these long-established principles. The program should at all times supplement and never duplicate what is being done locally. Its emphasis should be on the things that cannot be done well by the local districts.

There would be no purpose in having a mobile shop, developed to bring children in small one-teacher schools an opportunity to work with tools in a simple arts and crafts program, make regular stops at a large school which has a well-equipped shop and employs a manual arts teacher. Neither would there be any reason for an elementary supervisor to do regular classroom supervision in the schools of a district that makes good provisions for supervision through its own personnel. Rather than expending valuable resources in unnecessary duplication, these services should be given to districts that need and want them. In turn, the stronger districts should be given assistance with parts of their programs that are not yet so firmly established.

When a district assumes responsibility for providing an educational service that was initiated a few years earlier by the county superin-

⁸ Afif I. Tannous, "Extension Work Among the Arab Fellahin," *Farmers of the World*, edited by Edmund deS. Brunner and others, Columbia University Press, New York, 1945, p. 97.

tendent's office, it should be regarded as an indication of successful leadership—as tangible evidence that the program is effectively meeting an important educational need. There should be no feelings of jealousy and reluctance on the part of the county superintendent's office in turning such responsibilities over to the local districts. This releases resources of the county staff for new undertakings. The county level of administration will make its most important contribution by working along the growing edge of education initiating, experimenting, demonstrating, and turning responsibilities over to the local units as rapidly as they can assume them.

Spirit of Teamwork. A few years ago the staff members of the county superintendents' offices in California came together in a three-day conference on teamwork. The participants in this conference were concerned not only with keeping the corps of specialists on the county superintendent's central office staff a closely knit working team but they were also concerned with making the administrators, teachers, board members, parents, and pupils in every school district in the county members of the team. In their deliberations they thought of a single county school system comprised of a number of local units working together toward common ends. *My* job, *my* responsibility, *my* school became *our* job, *our* responsibility, and *our* school. The lone-wolf role of special supervisors, psychologists, transportation directors, and audio-visual-aids specialists slipped quietly into the background as they considered how the special competencies of each individual could best support the efforts of all. Teamwork was not regarded as an indefinite abstraction; it was thought of as a fundamental part of an action process. There is no opportunity for teamwork unless something is being done.

Teamwork cannot be accomplished by drawing beautiful charts, formulating profound statements of policy, and writing detailed job specifications. It is a live, organic, changing entity sustained by the relationships of people to each other. No person is really a member of a team who does not identify himself with what is being done. Once the job is his job, whether it be reorganization of school districts, improvement of classroom instruction, or securing additional finance for the support and operation of schools, he is on the team.

But successful participation as a member of a team is something more than the self-identification of an individual with what is being done. The undertaking which brings individuals together as members of a team must be something bigger than the individual himself—something that overreaches his own abilities and resources. Otherwise, he will not be challenged enough to give it wholehearted support or will be inclined to go on his own.

A county superintendent cannot have local superintendents and teachers who are active members of a countywide educational leadership team unless something challenging is being attempted. Competent people cannot be united around petty details and trivial issues. The higher the quality of the personnel with whom he works, the more carefully the superintendent must plan the purposes and goals of the countywide educational program.

Underlying the whole concept of teamwork in a county educational program is the personality of individuals—their capabilities, their ambitions to claim a place of distinction for themselves in the educational world, the value patterns that motivate and guide their actions. Their participation as members of the team must, in the end, pay off in terms of personal satisfactions. It is no simple task to plan a program of work that gives full consideration to individual personalities. Teachers have sought to accomplish it in their classroom through recognition of individual differences. Business and industry have indicated their concern about this problem by the emphasis given to personnel relations in organizations for the production and distribution of economic goods. Experiences in these and other fields have pointed conclusively to the need for knowing people better and for greater flexibility and more simplicity in organizations that bring the work of many people together in a common effort.

There is no simple recipe for good relationships between the county administrative staff members and the personnel in local school districts. Sound procedures must be based on the way people live, and the ways of life are complex. Those who are responsible for maintaining these relationships must be much more than mere technicians. Their plans and action programs must be based on a deep understanding of human behavior. They must have faith in people and a sincere belief that

the principles of democracy are as applicable to school administration as they are to agriculture production and township government. The programs of work for which they are responsible must be flavored by common sense. Organization should support and facilitate rather than rigidly govern and control the work that is done. The program of leadership in the planning stages as well as in the stages of operation will take full advantage of the knowledge and capabilities of many people. It will be directed toward what needs to be done as nearly as it can be discerned. It will provide opportunity for many people to become identified with it and give them an opportunity to gain satisfaction through being a part of it. Finally it will recognize every person in the entire district as an important person and try to give each one a good chance to become a better, more important person. To the extent that these conditions prevail, to that extent relationships between people at all levels of school administration will be sound.

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CHAPTER XI

The Function of the County Superintendent with Boards of Education

It was an open meeting of the Pasadena Board of Education. The meeting had been called to accept the resignation of the superintendent which had been requested by formal action of the board a few days earlier. Willard Goslin, the superintendent, was one of the top school administrators in the country and Pasadena was regarded by many people as having one of the country's leading school systems. Consequently, this unexpected action of the board of education had been heatedly discussed in the community and had quickly claimed nationwide attention. Many people, both within and outside the community, had urged the superintendent to withhold his resignation and to resist the action of the board.

The conference room of the administration building was packed. Many of the people in the audience had a friendly attitude toward Mr. Goslin and wanted to see him continue serving as their superintendent of schools. An air of tense, hushed expectancy hung over the audience as the meeting was formally opened and the president of the board slowly and clearly read aloud the superintendent's resignation. This was quickly followed by the adoption of a resolution accepting the resignation. Then, at the invitation of the president, Mr. Goslin stepped forward to justify in a few crisp sentences the action he had taken. At the close of his brief remarks he said:

In America we are dedicated to representative government. This nation to my mind has had its best experience with representative government

in terms of laymen elected to boards of education to manage the affairs of the public schools. I am so committed to this way of developing and managing education that I am unable to be in contempt of the elected representatives of the community when they have asked me to resign.¹

There have been but few more dramatic incidents in the administration of American public education than the Pasadena School Board's dismissal of Willard Goslin. Yet in this situation, as in many other tense and dramatic moments in the long development of public education, the underlying concepts of the school board's high responsibility to the community it serves and its unique position in the life of a democratic people have been the guide lines to action. In this brief statement made to a community by a school administrator when he was on the losing side of the decision, attention was forcefully called to the board's responsibility for translating the will and educational interests of the people in a community into action. The statement went beyond the personalities of individual board members or the action of a particular board and focused the attention of a community of tense people on the board of education as an institution created and sustained by free people as an instrument of democratic life.

RESPONSIBILITY OF GENERAL WELFARE

Responsibility for creating and operating a system of public education is a function of government that has been as clearly established and as firmly substantiated as the responsibility of government for constructing roads and bridges and for maintaining a police force. The purpose underlying this crystallization of responsibility, when viewed as a governmental function, is not primarily to give advantages to individuals but to sustain and to strengthen democratic government.

The overall interests and welfare of the community, the county, the state, and the nation take precedence over the desires of particular individuals. The Ordinance of 1787 declares that "religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and education shall forever be encouraged." It is in this sense that public education is regarded as a state function. It is

¹ David Hulburd, *This Happened in Pasadena*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1951, p. 152.

from this viewpoint that state legislatures have provided for the support of schools through public taxation, enacted compulsory attendance laws, and established minimum requirements for programs of studies, school plant accommodations, and teacher certification.

Since education is a function of state government, school board members are state officers. They may be selected in any manner the state legislature may prescribe and, indeed, there is much variation in practice. School board members are elected by popular vote, appointed by courts and city councils, selected by special commissions established for the sole purpose of designating school board members, and serve in an *ex officio* capacity. To these boards of education, however they are established, legislatures delegate responsibility, within broad limits prescribed by constitutional provisions and legislature enactments, to organize, operate, and support an educational program that is in keeping with the needs and interests of the people.

In no other country of the world has there been such a wide dispersal of important administrative responsibility. To this unique characteristic of American public education can be attributed in no small way the flexibility, individuality, and wide range of educational opportunity provided for children of school age and the adult population.

AN AGENCY FOR COMMUNITY ACTION

The board of education, in the mind of the typical parent and average citizen, is more than an institution of democracy framed by theoretical principles and legal enactments. It is more than a corporate body to which has been delegated responsibilities pertaining to the general welfare of the body politic. It is more than a group of officers acting on behalf of the state.

The board of education is a personalized agency of local community action. It is close to the people. What it does is quickly reflected in a personal way in the life of every home in the community. The educational opportunities of Mary and Johnny and Susie and Tommy are closely tied to its actions. Its responsibilities to them and to their playmates take preëminence over every other responsibility it may have. Memories of bygone schooldays, enthusiasm for the athletic team and

band, pride in the school plant, and the pocket-digging interest of the taxpayers come to a focal point in the school board's policy and action and must be blended and tuned to the gradually shaping future of the community's youth.

The average citizen seldom thinks of the school board member as a state official. He is a neighbor who has been chosen to translate the needs, interests, and resources of the neighborhood or community into an educational program. His first responsibility is to the people in the community who have selected him to act and speak for them on educational matters. His first obligations are to the children in the local district. This closeness to community life and the presence of personal interest and sympathy in its deliberations and actions have made the American local school board a unique institution of local government.

A POSITION OF COMMUNITY TRUST

The individual board member is elected by popular vote in about 85 percent of all school districts. In most instances, he serves without pay. At his best, he is motivated to devote time and effort toward fulfilling the functions of the position by a sincere desire to serve his community and by the prestige attached to the office.

The school board enjoys a fuller measure of public confidence and respect than almost any other governmental agency. It is entrusted with one of the largest items of local governmental expenditures and a potentially rich opportunity for developing a system of political patronage; yet, over the years, school boards have held these trusts in such high regard that only in rare instances have financial gains and personal advantage been identified with school board policy and action. They have been so free of corrupt practices that when some questionable action is called to attention by an alert press or civic group the public is all but astounded.

BROAD POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Boards of education are endowed with broad, discretionary powers the exercise of which goes far toward shaping the educational opportunities of the children, youth, and adults in their communities. They are in effect the custodians of the educational future of children and

youth. What they fail to do for lack of vision may strike the educational birthright of children and youth with telling effect that equals or even surpasses the effects of positive action. One who is reasonably familiar with education in rural areas can point again and again to communities in which children attend classes in dingy, dusty, dirty, ill-smelling buildings, taught by meagerly trained, poorly paid, unimaginative teachers, largely because boards of education have lacked the vision, courage, and initiative to bring about improved conditions. Instances can be cited again and again in which forty or fifty children are crowded into a classroom that was build to accommodate twenty-five or thirty children. In other communities, children are attending school on a half-day basis because of sheer lack of housing space, and are forced out of high school with narrow traditional curriculums long before their school experiences should be terminated. These conditions exist largely because of what boards of education have failed to do when they have not met the full responsibility delegated to them by the state and entrusted to them by their neighbors.

But the positive side of the community educational leadership provided by local school boards greatly outweighs its negative aspects. All along the educational scene, particularly in rural areas, marked progress has been made during the past three decades. It has been during this period that vocational agriculture, vocational homemaking, trade and industrial education, directed physical education, and a school lunch program have become accepted parts of the curriculum in many rural school systems. It is by no means unusual for small rural communities rightfully to point with pride to the provisions in their educational program for personal and vocational guidance and health education services for their children.

A review of the plans for rural school plants exhibited in the 1951 American Association of School Administrators' Architectural Exhibit shows health suites, shops, cafeterias, libraries, and indoor and outdoor planned play space in both elementary and secondary schools. School plant facilities in many rural communities are equal to and in some instances surpass the school plant facilities in many well-administered city school systems.

The provision of free textbooks, library facilities, audio-visual-aids

equipment, and arts and crafts materials has become a commonly accepted responsibility of boards of education in most rural communities. These improvements have been made in the school through countless decisions of boards of education in routine meetings and through their quiet but persistent community leadership. Boards that have had most vision and have pushed farthest ahead have become lighthouses for boards that have moved more slowly, and have made the position of the laggards stand out in clearer perspective.

MANY SCHOOL BOARDS

There were 84,648 local school districts and 2461 intermediate school districts in the United States in 1950.² In each local district and in many intermediate districts there is a board of education. The size of the boards ranges from one member in the rural areas of Indiana, where a single township trustee acts in the capacity of a board of education, to as many as twenty-one members in a large city school system. Altogether, there are about 400,000 school board members in the country.³ By far the largest part of them are in the small rural school districts that are under the jurisdiction of the county superintendents. Small rural school districts are still so numerous in some parts of the country that it is not unusual to find county intermediate districts in which there are more school board members than teachers.

A guest speaker recently invited by the superintendent of a Midwestern county intermediate district to address a meeting of the school boards in the county was surprised to have an audience of more than 500 people. When he asked the superintendent for an explanation of the large number of people present, he was astounded to learn that practically all the people present were school board members and that the audience would have been considerably larger if there had been full attendance. In this particular county there were 200 local school districts. With three board members in each district the reason for a large audience was apparent at once.

The situation described above is atypical, but county intermediate

² Howard A. Dawson, "Trends in School District Reorganization," *The Phi Delta Kappan*, March, 1951, p. 305.

³ Daniel R. Davies and Fred W. Hosler, *The Challenge of School Board Membership*, Chartwell House, New York, 1949, p. 2.

districts in which the county superintendent works with forty or fifty local boards of education are not at all unusual in several Midwestern states where the one-teacher school district is still the predominant type of administrative organization for rural schools.

Many situations in the State of Missouri illustrate the complex and extensive responsibility county superintendents have for providing educational leadership to local school boards. In this state, after marked progress in local school district reorganization had been made, there were yet sixty-five of the 114 counties that had more than fifty functioning local districts. Each of thirty counties had seventy-five or more local districts and in each of five counties the number of local districts exceeds one hundred. There were only four counties in the entire state in which there were ten or less local districts.

TYPES OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT-SCHOOL BOARD RELATIONSHIPS

There are three general types of county superintendent-school board relationships. First, in the county-unit states, the county superintendent is the executive officer of a local board of education and is directly responsible for administering an educational program in conformity with plans and policies formulated by this board. The superintendent of schools in a county unit has no direct responsibility to any board of education except the county-unit board.

The second type of situation is in the intermediate districts in which there are no boards of education except the local district boards. With but few exceptions, the county superintendents in Arizona, Kansas, Montana, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming; the supervisory district superintendents in New York State; and the supervisory union superintendents in the New England states have no intermediate district boards to assist them in forming policy. A typical superintendent may serve in a general administrative and supervisory capacity from five to fifty or even more local boards, each of which represents a different type of situation with unique problems, but he does not act wholly in the sense of a chief executive officer for any one board.

The third type of county superintendent-school board relationship

is in the states in which the county superintendent serves as secretary of a county board of education and is at the same time responsible for providing general educational leadership to the ten, twenty, forty, or more local administrative units that comprise the county intermediate district. There are sixteen states in which this type of administrative organization is predominant.

The methods by which members of county boards of education are selected as well as their functions vary widely. In South Carolina, for example, the county board of education usually consists of three members, one of whom is the county superintendent serving in an ex officio capacity. Frequently, the two other members of the board are appointed by the governor, state board of education, or the representatives from the county to the state legislative assembly.⁴ The chief function of this board is to serve in an advisory capacity to the county superintendent.

The complexity of the relationships between the county superintendent and boards of education at two different administrative levels in the same county is illustrated by the pattern of organization in Indiana. In this state the county superintendent together with the trustees of the local township districts in the county constitute a county board of education. The county superintendent is appointed by the trustees of the local districts and serves in the dual capacity of board member and administrative officer of the board. Furthermore, he is the chief educational advisor to the local township districts in which each individual trustee acts as a local board. Thus, when the trustees from the different local districts are assembled in an official meeting together with the county superintendent, they constitute an intermediate district board and function as such. After the meeting adjourns, each individual trustee constitutes a local district board of education.⁵

The county board of education in Iowa as shown in Chapter IV is elected by popular vote. For purposes of election, the entire county is divided into four election areas. One board member is elected in each

⁴ John H. Martin and others, *Public Schools of South Carolina*, a Report of the South Carolina Education Survey Committee, Division of Surveys and Field Services, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, 1948, p. 172.

⁵ Clement T. Malan, *School Law of Indiana*, Indiana State Department of Public Instruction, Indianapolis, 1946, p. 156 (Section 7-68).

election area and a fifth member is elected by the county at large. This board of education appoints the county superintendent, fixes his salary and travel expense allowance, and on recommendation of the county superintendent employs such professional and clerical assistants as are needed to perform the functions of the office.

The Iowa county board of education is empowered to levy taxes and to plan and operate a countywide educational program that supplements the programs in the local districts. It is a policy-forming board for a county school system comprised of a number of autonomous local administrative units. The county superintendent is the chief executive officer of this board, but at the same time he serves in the capacity of a general administrative and supervisory officer to the local boards.

The Iowa type of organization is in keeping with sound principles of county school administration. It places responsibility on the local districts for providing as much of the total educational program as their resources will permit, and begins providing supplementary services at the point at which their inadequacies begin to appear. It provides for a representative lay board elected by popular vote and directly responsible to the people. It gives the county board levying power and a budget under its control with which to carry on a program of educational activities at the intermediate district level. It creates a county school system which gives the strength of unity without the deadening influence of regimentation. And it makes the county superintendency a professional office.

FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD

For a clear understanding of the working relationships between the county superintendent and local school boards one must look first at the broad functions and responsibilities of the school boards. What are they trying to do? What do the people in their communities who have been responsible for placing them in office expect of them?

People in large and small school districts alike look to their boards of education for good schools. Ideas of what constitutes a good school may vary widely, and understanding of the facilities, personnel, and services needed to have good schools may be limited; but, nevertheless, people expect the board of education to provide good educational

advantages for the children in the school district. This is the school board's job.

In meeting the educational expectation of the community, the school board's most important responsibilities are to see that competent teachers and other personnel are employed in the schools; to see that conditions are maintained which permit these people to work effectively; to marshal the resources of the community needed to support the schools; to activate the energies lying dormant in the people of the community; and to direct these energies toward the development of the educational program.⁶

A CONSULTANT AND ADVISOR

The county superintendent, particularly in an intermediate district, is a consultant, an advisor, a leader for the school boards. His first and most important responsibility is to help each and all school boards in the county to function as effectively as possible. Together, they constitute an educational team in the school district. In a general way, he shares in the school board's responsibility, for his effectiveness as an educational leader is judged in terms of the quality of the educational programs in the local districts.

HOW COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS WORK WITH SCHOOL BOARDS

The board of education is endowed with great authority and broad discretionary powers, but the exercise of these powers brings to the forefront the multiplicity of activities and problems involved in and related to the operation of a school system. A report of the Tulare County, California, schools graphically calls attention to many aspects of an educational program that demand the attention and considered judgment of boards of education. In this county there are eighty-eight local school districts and, consequently, eighty-eight different local school boards that employ 1500 teachers, enroll 34,674 children in 128 different schools, and have budgets amounting to a total of more than \$7 million.

The goals of the boards of education in this county which serve as

⁶ W. A. Early, "How Superintendents Develop Competencies," *The School Executive*, December, 1951, pp. 39-41.

guide lines to their action in meeting after meeting throughout the school year are tersely and concisely stated in terms of accomplishments they would have for every boy and girl enrolled in the schools for which they are responsible—mastery of the fundamentals, healthful living, good citizenship, vocational preparation, and getting the most out of life.

But what is involved in accomplishing these ends? Hearing tests to aid in detecting and measuring hearing loss so that needed corrections can be made; nurse, parent, pupil, teacher conferences on health problems; speech correction; psychological testing and counseling to help children with unusual problems; special instruction and guidance for physically handicapped children; work in a well-equipped physical science laboratory; physical education; field trips; music and art; instructional supplies, including books, maps, filmstrips, slides, charts, and recordings; and school plant facilities. A listing of their accomplishments merely gives glimpses of the multiplicity of activities and materials that are involved in a well-rounded educational program. These and the many other advantages available to the children in the schools of this county are provided because of decisions made and action taken by boards of education in planning budgets, employing personnel, and forming educational policy. The county superintendent's work with the boards has been successful to the extent that he has aided them in making sounder decisions, taking more constructive action, and adopting better policy.⁷

THE BOARD'S CONCEPT OF WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD BE AND DO

The board of education is a policy-forming body. Responsibility for the actual operation of the schools and the details of management is delegated to professional school personnel—in larger districts to the local district superintendent and his staff; in smaller districts to principals and teachers. These professional employees work within the framework of educational policy established by the board.

But merely to say that a board of education establishes policy is to

⁷ J. Post Williams, *Tulare County Schools*, Annual Report of the County Superintendent of Schools, Visalia, California, 1951, pp. 1-20.

dispose of a basic concept of school administration in a greatly oversimplified manner. What is educational policy? How is it stated? How is it formed? Boards of education do not sit down in meeting after meeting and work at policy forming. Policy is not formed in a vacuum and neither is it a vague abstract statement of theory. Educational policy is alive and frequently exerts a direct influence on questions as specific as the number of days in the school year, the salary paid the superintendent, the professional qualifications of teachers, a boy's participation in the high school band, and the use of school buildings for recreational purposes. Educational policy empowers, informs, and guides. It is a basis for action. It provides for stability in the educational program, while at the same time it pushes forward into the future.⁸ It embodies the philosophy of the school and gives form to the educational program. It is a crystallization of the school board's conception of what the schools ought to be and do.

NO ONE BEST WAY TO FORM POLICY

Educational policy may be, and frequently is, established as a result of recommendations made by the local or county superintendent; it may emerge from earlier experiences in the school district; it may be formed as a result of action taken by the board on an important problem or issue of immediate concern; it may be developed through long-range planning and coöperative study involving school board, superintendent, teachers, and groups of students and adult lay citizens. There is no one best way nor no one particular time to formulate policy. The important point is that educational policy be sound, that it be clearly stated, and that it lead rather than drift aimlessly about with the whims, pressures, and prejudices of community life.

REGULATIONS FLOW FROM POLICY

Educational policies differ from regulations as constitutional provisions differ from statutory enactments. Policy states purposes. Regulations flow from policy and prescribe the specific details of action. The adoption of a teachers' salary schedule by a school board is a matter of

⁸ Jesse B. Sears, *The Nature of the Administrative Process*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, New York, 1950, p. 312.

policy, but the provisions made for tenure, training, and years of experience as they are related to the salary schedule are regulations. Decisions to emphasize vocational preparation, health education, or personal guidance in the instructional programs are acts of policy making, but the specific provisions for implementation are regulatory functions.

Educational policy exists in the form of recorded action in the minutes of school board meetings; in handbooks prepared and adopted by the boards to be used by administrators, teachers, bus drivers, maintenance employees, and janitors; informal statements printed and distributed widely in the school district; and in a vague, informal, taken-for-granted, commonly accepted state of being that never quite reaches maturity.

STATEMENTS OF POLICY

Educational policy may exist to some extent in all these forms. In rural districts and in many city school systems, there is a marked absence of formally stated policy. Where such a statement is not clearly established and understood, superintendents are insecure because their duties and responsibilities are not well-defined; teachers tread with steps of uncertainty because they know not what to expect from the school board and parents have only a vague, indefinite understanding of what the school seeks to accomplish. Trouble frequently arises when new members come on the school board or there is a change in the superintendency or principalship of the school.

There are two general types of formal statements of educational policy. One type is a statement of philosophy outlining in broad general terms the purposes of the schools and the functions of personnel. These publications are printed in pamphlet form under such titles as *Plan of Action*, *Goals of Education*, *Our Educational Philosophy*, and *We Believe*. The following excerpts from a statement of policy published by the Cedar Rapids Public School District illustrate the viewpoint and content of these publications.

We believe that . . .

all individuals should have equal social status . . . each child should have ready access to resource materials and aid for learning . . . the teacher should assist each pupil in achieving his maximum development

... the school staff should work understandingly with children ... many kinds of projects contribute to pupil growth ... the library is a tool for students and teachers ... pupils should learn to recognize what is worth thinking about as well as how to think ... the selection of teachers should be made by the superintendent in cooperation with the principals and other staff members ... the school plant should be planned to meet community needs.⁹

A second type of policy statement is in the form of a handbook which outlines in considerable detail the duties and responsibilities of staff personnel and states the general rules and regulations governing school board operation. In a typical publication of this type there are sections dealing with the organization and responsibilities of the board of education; procedures for school board meetings; duties and responsibilities of the school superintendent, custodian of school funds, assistant superintendent of business administration, principals, supervisors, director of transportation, lunchroom supervisors, and director of school plant maintenance. Procedures are established for the appointment and placement of personnel, purchase of equipment and instructional supplies, management of school money, accounting of school supplies, admission of children into school, and supervision of attendance.

School board handbooks frequently establish procedures and pin down responsibilities by such specific statements as the following:

Individual members of the board of education will not consider applications for positions in the school system made to them by individuals but will refer applicants to the superintendent.

It shall be the policy of the board of education to consider all school business at meetings of the board of education and to avoid commitment through personal interviews with individuals which might tend to hamper or embarrass individual members, or prejudice their decisions when matters finally come before the board for settlement.

The superintendent shall have the right of initiative in all professional matters, including those pertaining to personnel, selection of textbooks, purchase of all books and supplies, formation and adoption of courses of studies and student activities.

⁹ Clyde Parker, *We Believe*, Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools, Cedar Rapids, 1950.

The superintendent shall direct the development of the annual budget preparatory to its presentation to the board for adoption.

All requisitions for school furniture shall be sent to the director of school plant operations.

The supervisor of transportation shall supervise the purchase of all parts and tires and see that they are properly accounted for.

The purchasing agent shall maintain standard supply lists and determine quality standards as a basis for specifications for supplies. He shall purchase all supplies, materials, and equipment for the board of education except in cases otherwise provided for in these rules and regulations.

Principals shall have direction over all teachers, custodians, clerks, and other school employees within their respective schools.

Teachers shall be responsible for educational advancement and growth in their classes.¹⁰

TOWARD BETTER EDUCATIONAL POLICY

So much responsibility rests with local boards of education and their actions have such a pronounced and direct influence on the character and quality of schools that there is no more important approach a county superintendent can make toward improving schools in rural areas than to help school boards establish sound, forward-looking educational policy. This is a long-term job that is never completely finished because many aspects of good educational policy change with changes in community life and grow with growth in the educational program. Neither is there any cut and dried method of helping school boards with this important function. Time, place, and the nature of the problems of immediate concern to the school board frequently dictate the methods that can be used most effectively in improving educational policy.

Sixty local school boards in a rural county in Kansas have informally adopted a policy of employing the best-qualified teachers the resources of their districts can attract. Salary schedules have been raised until they equal and even surpass the salaries of teachers in city districts in the state. The need of a neighboring farmer's wife or daughter for a job is no longer a criterion for teacher selection. While the law does

¹⁰ An adaptation from a mimeographed statement by Rayburn Fisher, Assistant County Superintendent of Schools, Birmingham, Alabama, 1951.

not require it, employment of teachers is made only upon the recommendation of the county superintendent. This procedure has become accepted practice and it has resulted in better educational advantages for the children in these rural districts.

A county superintendent in Wisconsin increased the quality and amount of instructional supplies and equipment in the rural schools of the county by the simple device of making an inventory at the end of the year of the materials and equipment on hand in each school, and then indicating on the form the equipment and supplies needed for satisfactory school operation and returning it to the board. Boards throughout the county accepted the county superintendent's suggestions and purchased the materials. Thus, the simple but very important policy of providing teachers and pupils with plenty of suitable working materials and equipment was adopted.

INDUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Many county superintendents have made the induction of newly elected board members into office an occasion for policy formation. In preparation for the induction program the minutes of board meetings for several previous years are reviewed and decisions of a policy-forming character are catalogued. Oral discussion of these decisions acquaints board members with established policy and provides a basis for needed improvements. A brief survey of current educational problems made coöperatively by the board and superintendent is another feature of induction programs that provides a good basis for policy formation.

The importance of the school board member's position is emphasized in manuals that are sometimes given to board members as a part of the induction program. Such a manual, described by Dean Weltzin, incorporates the following ideas:

The board of education is the governmental agency through which the people in the community realize most of their formal educational advantages.

The ethical and moral standards of school board members must be as high as the educational ideals of the community.

The community's schools are no better than the board.

Power lies in the board, not in the individual.

Board members should assume leadership in meeting the financial problems in the school district.

Budget making is a cooperative process involving the board, the superintendent, principals, teachers, and parents.

Learning activities should be used as a basis for checking the soundness of board policy.

Board members should consider the future as well as the present in policy formation.¹¹

INTERPRETATION OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Over the years the administration of a system of public education, whether it be in a large or small community, becomes an increasingly complex responsibility. There was a time when rural school boards gave but little attention to fire protection codes, safety regulations, and standards for water supply and sewage disposal when new school plants were being planned. They were not much concerned about standards for teacher certification, teacher-pupil ratios, and high school accreditation. They knew nothing about formulae for state aid distribution, withholding tax, and teacher retirement funds. Pupil transportation, federally subsidized lunch programs, and tenure regulations were unknown. The school board, together with people in the community, planned and operated the community educational program within the legal framework of a few broad state constitutional and statutory provisions. Educational planning, budget making, and financial accounting were relatively simple matters that were influenced but little by forces outside the immediate community or neighborhood.

But such conditions no longer prevail. The strategic position of education in a democratic society is being more fully recognized and repeated efforts are made by state governments to strengthen and safeguard it. Scarcely a session of a state legislature goes by without the enactment of laws that have a direct influence on community education. Contributions of state aid toward the support of community education call for regulations to ensure fair distribution and proper accounting. Hazards to health and safety of children created by traffic,

¹¹ J. F. Weltzin, *Report of the 1951 Northwest Regional Conference on Administrative Leadership Serving Community Schools*, American Association of School Administrators, Washington, D.C., 1951, p. 6.

multiunit buildings, and congested community life demand that necessary safeguards be established.

Most of the regulations with which local school boards must conform are established by state law because education is a state function, but state board of education and state department of public instruction rulings sometimes operate with the effect of law. Furthermore, the prestige of some accrediting associations is such that boards of education cannot afford to disregard their standards.

The local superintendent of schools in larger community districts and city school systems is responsible for advising the school board so that its action will be in conformity with state laws and other essential regulations. To the thousands of boards of education in small rural districts the county superintendent is the first and by far the most important legal adviser.

This is a most important responsibility. A school budget that is not planned in conformity with state regulations may result in loss of the school district's share of state school funds; a school bond election that is not held in the manner prescribed by law may be declared void; failure to comply with the laws governing the expenditure of school funds may make board members personally responsible for reimbursing the school district, even though the expenditure was made in good faith.¹² The work of the school board must be done in accordance with the provisions of state laws.

Rural school boards may, and many times do, turn to the state's attorney or to attorneys in private practice for advice on important legal matters, but for the most part they rely on the county superintendent of schools for interpretation of school law and state department of education rulings.

A one-day county institute for school board members is one of the most effective ways county superintendents have for keeping local district boards up to date on school legislation, state department of education regulations, and generally accepted educational standards. Specialists in school finance, school transportation, and public health frequently appear on the programs of these institutes and are available throughout the day for conferences with school board members on

¹² Newton Edwards, *The Courts and the Public Schools*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1941, pp. 394-395.

special problems. Regular monthly bulletins or newsletters from the county superintendent's office supplement the institutes, but there remain yet the numerous individual problems on tuition charges, budgetary planning, accounting, sale of school property, pupil admissions and transfers, and annual reports that must be met through individual discussion between the county superintendent and perplexed school board members. There is nothing so effective in school administration as unhurried, painstaking, personal contacts.

SCHOOL BOARD RECORDS

Frequently, boards of education in small rural communities have no office space in which to transact the business of the board and make only the most meager provisions for office supplies and filing equipment. Furthermore, many of the members have had but little experience in keeping formal records of meetings. As a consequence, the minutes of smaller rural district board meetings are, in many instances, woefully inadequate. The South Carolina School Survey Commission of 1948 reported that two-thirds of the elementary school districts and one-fourth of the high school districts studied in this survey did not have satisfactory records of board meetings.¹³ The situation reflected by this survey may be atypical, but in most states county superintendents can do much to place rural boards of education on a firmer operating basis by assisting them in improving the records of their meetings and transactions.

The educational advantages of children, the investment of the public, and the status of teachers and other school employees are closely tied to school board action. A decision that appears to be trivial at the moment may assume great proportions when unexpected difficulties or controversies arise. Moehlman reports that more than 1000 supreme court decisions have been made because of questions involving the official records of school boards.¹⁴

The school board is too important for its actions to be treated in an

¹³ John H. Martin and others, *Public Schools of South Carolina*, South Carolina Education Survey Committee, Division of Surveys and Field Services, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, 1948, p. 167.

¹⁴ Arthur B. Moehlman, *School Administration*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1951, p. 143.

indifferent manner or records of its decisions entrusted to gentlemen's agreements, common understanding, and the memory of man. Accurate and concise records of all meetings and of all business transactions should be kept in a form that can be permanently filed and quickly referred to when necessary.

Minutes of board meetings need not be written in stilted phrases and formal style. Rural school board members are unpretentious folk and records of their actions should be written in a simple manner, but simplicity and informality do not preclude accuracy and completeness. The minutes of a board meeting should accurately record the date of the meeting; the hour the meeting was called to order; whether it was a regular or a special meeting, and state the purpose if it was a special meeting; the names of the board members present; a complete record of the acts of the board; and resolution for adjournment.

Reports concerning the operation of the schools and recommendations made by the superintendent should be recorded in the minutes, even though the board of education takes no formal action regarding them. A few years ago the superintendent of a county school system was being subjected to severe criticism by the people in the county district because of dissatisfaction with a pupil transportation system that was privately operated. The problem became so serious that a survey committee was appointed to study the situation and report to the people. In reviewing the minutes of board meetings for several previous years, the survey committee discovered that on two occasions the board had disregarded formal recommendations, supported by factual information, made by the superintendent for the establishment of a board-operated school transportation system. Report of this information to the people placed the superintendent in a much stronger position in the school district.

The minutes of board meetings should be signed by the legal officer or officers of the board, usually the secretary or the president and secretary.

A loose-leaf book with consecutively numbered pages, size 8½ by 14 inches, is an appropriate minute book. The cover or binder should be of lasting quality and the binding rod should have capacity sufficient for a fiscal year.

In some school systems the secretary of the board follows the practice of numbering in consecutive order by large numerals placed on the margin of the minute book all resolutions adopted by the board from the beginning to the end of the fiscal year. This simple device facilitates reference to former board action.¹⁵

SEEING THAT COMPETENT PEOPLE ARE PLACED IN THE SCHOOLS

Employing personnel is one of the most important functions of the school board, whether the district be large or small, for the educational advantages provided by the school district cannot be much better than the personnel employed. The personnel employed in a small district may consist only of a teacher and a part-time janitor. In a larger district, fifty, a hundred, or even more persons may be employed: teachers, principals, supervisors, nurses, lunchroom directors, bus drivers, maintenance men, and janitors. The school board determines the services to be provided, establishes standards for employment that are in harmony with the broad purposes of the schools, and tries to employ persons who can competently fill the positions.

In larger school districts the local superintendent interviews applicants and makes recommendations to the board for employment. In such districts the county superintendent usually does no more than refer promising applicants for employment to the local district superintendent and check to see that teaching credentials meet the minimum requirements of state law. It is the smaller districts in which applicants are personally interviewed and employed by the board that make the greatest demands on the ingenuity and leadership skill of the county superintendent. In most states there are no legal requirements and but little established precedent which make recommendation of the county superintendent a prerequisite for employing teachers and other school personnel. This is a jealously guarded responsibility that is usually regarded more as a right and privilege of the local school board than as a sound administrative procedure. County superintendents may advise and recommend, but the board is under no legal

¹⁵ Harlan L. Hagman, *A Handbook for the School Board Member*, School Activities Publishing Company, Topeka, 1941, p. 47.

compulsion to accept their suggestions other than to employ persons whose qualifications meet minimum legal requirements.

Securing capable teachers for small rural schools is by no means an easy task. Most small schools in rural areas are elementary schools, and for the past decade there has been a shortage of well-qualified elementary teachers which has been particularly acute in rural areas. The difficulty is further increased by the marked tendency of teachers to prefer positions in larger schools where salaries, tenure, and working conditions are usually more advantageous. City and village superintendents, well aware that teachers consider a move from a small school system to a larger one a promotion, are continuously on the alert for promising young teachers who have had a year or two of experience in a one-teacher school.

Many rural boards that have found themselves on the losing end of the competition with larger school systems for good elementary teachers have turned to the county superintendent for assistance. Almost invariably the results have been improvement in the quality of instruction. County superintendents have not been content with sending a teacher to the school who is poorly qualified or who will stay only until she gets an opportunity to move to a larger system. They have tried to get to the bottom of the problem and root out factors that make teaching in the district undesirable. They have helped board members and parents form clearer and fuller concepts of what constitutes a good school. They have aided them in overcoming the feeling that small school districts cannot expect to have nor afford to employ first-class, topnotch teachers. They have led them to see the importance of good salaries, adequate materials and equipment for classroom work, clean, attractive surroundings, reasonable job security, and satisfactory living quarters. School districts that make teaching positions attractive have gone a long way toward giving children good educational opportunities.

Such progress toward educational improvement is not made by giving professional advice and technical assistance in a cold, austere manner, nor by "off-the-cuff" decisions and hurried action to meet situations of emergency. It comes through long-range, careful, persistent efforts to help people work out the solution to a problem of real

concern to them. In counties where the superintendent has demonstrated leadership of such quality, the question is seldom raised as to whether he should or should not make recommendations for teacher employment. These superintendents have won the confidence and respect of the people. School boards turn to them for counsel and advice because the result is better schools and less administrative headaches in their communities.

SECURING FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Good schools cannot be maintained on good will and sentimental feelings. It takes money to employ good teachers and to maintain conditions in which they can work effectively. Much of the financial support for public education comes from the local district. The average for the country as a whole in 1949-1950 was 55 percent from local units of government, 43 percent from state governments, and 2 percent from the federal government.¹⁶

Securing financial support for the schools is a continuous communitywide job in which the board of education should, and in most instances does, assume major leadership responsibility. Financial support is not something that is coordinate with or subordinate to the instructional program. It is an integral part of community education. In the same sense that the board of education formulates policy relative to personnel, plant facilities, and instruction, it should formulate policy pertinent to securing and administering the finances needed to support and operate the schools.

The public should be fully aware of the board's policy and board members should not be adverse to assuming an active role in discussing important issues and in making the needs of the schools known to the public. It is an unfortunate situation when the board of education remains quietly and unobtrusively in the background while the superintendent and teachers carry on a vigorous campaign for financial support of community education. Such situations tend to give the impression that the schools are for the teachers and that only persons who are motivated by personal interest seek to improve them.

¹⁶ Willard E. Givens, *Schools for Our Times*, Annual Report of the Profession to the Public, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1951, p. 9.

COMPETITION FOR PUBLIC FUNDS

In every state and in every school district, competition for public funds by an increasing number of public service agencies is becoming keener. More traffic lights at the street corners, additional traffic officers, straighter roads and wider bridges, safe water supplies, better sewage disposal, more thorough inspection of public eating places and food stores, unemployment insurance, care of indigent children, control of communicable diseases, and pensions for the retired and aged are but a few of the many services that are demanding larger shares of public tax dollars.

These are important services. People want them. They are integral parts of the higher standard of living the schools have ardently and effectively supported, but in a very realistic sense they are in competition with the schools for public funds. There are but few communities that can buy everything that is desirable whether purchases are made with public funds or private resources. Values must be weighed and choices made. The community spends its money for what it believes to be most important. The largest share of community resources may well go to the service agency that presents its case best.

Leadership from such departments of state and local government as public health, highways, public welfare, and the police force presents the needs of the departments and the contributions they are making to community life in a most effective manner. They have surpassed the schools in the art of pointing to specific and concrete evidence of the value of what they are doing for the ongoing life of the community. Such leadership is not to be deplored. No progressive community would want its leadership of these public service agencies to be less effective, but it does forcibly call to attention the need for school boards and the professional leadership they employ to develop more effective methods for acquainting the public with the needs of the schools and with what good schools mean to individuals, to families, to the community, to the state, and to the nation.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE SMALL DISTRICT

When a business or industrial organization is confronted with a difficult problem it employs the services of specially trained personnel

to advise the board of directors in the formulation of policy and to carry out the details of a program planned to deal objectively with the problem. In large school systems research specialists are employed to compile factual information and public relations specialists are added to the staff to formulate and direct a program of school-public relations. But most smaller rural school districts cannot employ such specialized personnel. They turn to the county superintendent for assistance.

The county superintendent's assistance to local school boards with the problems of financing community education must go far beyond providing technical advice and clerical assistance in preparing the annual budget and in accounting for expenditures. Such assistance is essential and must be provided, but at its best it seldom reaches beyond issues and procedures of momentary and superficial nature. The problems of school finance that loom largest before boards of education in most districts—large and small alike—are rooted in the attitudes of people toward public education. The board of education, no matter how progressively minded it may be, cannot go much beyond the understanding and desire of a majority of the people. People must want good schools before they will support good schools.

Communities of people differ as human personalities differ. Issues pertinent to the support of public education come into the foreground of community thinking in many forms. The approaches made toward meeting these issues in a constructive manner must be uniquely adapted to each community, but there are broad problems and general needs common to most school districts that serve as points of orientation for county superintendents and boards of education.

COMMON PROBLEMS

1. Financial support for education is stronger when the lay public recognizes that the schools are a productive part of our national economy—that they pay their way—that expenditures made for education are good financial investments.

2. Financial support of education is stronger when people in the community can identify in concrete, objective terms contributions the schools are making to individual, family, and community life. The

Agriculture Extension Service, particularly through its 4-H Club activities, livestock and farm crop improvement programs, and home demonstration work, has demonstrated the effectiveness of focusing the attention of the public on tangible evidence of achievements. Many public school systems could materially strengthen school-public relations through appropriate adaptation of practices followed by this important rural education agency.

3. Boards of education in most rural school districts need assistance in evaluating community education and in making intelligible reports to the public. In far too many rural school districts evaluation of the educational program is made in a complex, technical manner that is not readily understood by the average laymen, or it is made on the basis of broad generalization and sensational newspaper stories that do not constitute a sound basis for appraisal. Evaluation is an important function of the school board that calls for long-range, carefully planned procedures.

4. School boards in rural districts need assistance in securing and giving guidance to the participation of lay people in educational planning. Constructive assistance from the lay public in developing the educational budget, in school plant planning, and in curriculum development undoubtedly places the community school on a firmer basis, but the actual process of securing and giving proper guidance to such assistance requires leadership skill that local school boards cannot well provide without the counsel and advice of capable professional people.

EFFECTIVE WORKING PROCEDURES

Problems of this type cannot be met by cut and dried methods or "canned" answers. Their solution requires carefully planned, long-range, flexible programs of broad educational leadership. Capable county superintendents do not assume the role of a trouble-shooter who helps the board out of difficult situations or carries it through rough places. To the contrary, they try to help boards help themselves. Public education is a local district, local community, local school board responsibility. The burden of effective leadership rests where responsibility is placed.

SCHOOL-PUBLIC RELATIONS

Much of what people know about their schools they learn from newspapers and radio. With the rapid development now taking place, television holds promise of soon becoming an even more powerful medium of forming public concepts and molding public opinion. In the past, small rural school districts have not made full use of the opportunities offered by these media of mass communication. They have lacked the skill necessary for writing effective newspaper stories and developing good radio programs. Lack of such competencies becomes even more noticeable as an increasing amount of time for educational programs is made available by radio and television broadcasting stations. Many county superintendents see in this problem an opportunity to assist local districts by conducting institutes and workshops on the use of newspapers, radio, and television for educational purposes. They see the necessity of making the services of skilled persons available to assist in preparing news releases and wire recordings and to help organize radio programs based on the instructional programs and needs in local districts.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Lay advisory committees and councils are being organized in increasing numbers as a means of keeping the roots of the school deeply embedded in community life. In some instances, county councils are formed which function in an advisory capacity to the county superintendent and county board of education by reflecting the needs and interests of people at the local district level. More often, lay advisory committees are formed in the local districts. Encouraging and directing such lay participation is becoming a more and more important part of the county superintendent's work.

ANNUAL REPORTS

The cold, gray annual report of the school district to the people, characterized by drabness and column after column of figures that few people had the courage to read and no one outside of the superintendent's office fully comprehended, is being replaced by colorful, graphic

pamphlets that give more emphasis to what the schools are doing than to absences, tardiness, and per pupil expenditures.

It is the city systems and larger community districts that have taken the lead in developing this type of report, but the need for an intelligible report to people in smaller districts is equally as great as in the larger centers of population. These reports have been slow to develop largely because of the cost involved and lack of technical "know-how." But these are not unsurmountable difficulties. By pooling their resources and planning their reports well in advance of the publication date, many small school districts are publishing effective annual reports at costs that are by no means unreasonable. Suggested plans of work, a little encouragement when needed, a bit of technical help from the county superintendent's office at strategic points, and small rural school districts can do a commendable job of reporting to the people.

A FOCAL POINT OF COMMUNITY ACTION

The school in any district is a result of what has happened in the past. People have made it by their thoughts and actions. In assuming its responsibilities, the school board becomes an inheritor of what has happened in the past. It accepts the school as it is with all its assets and its liabilities, its strength and its weakness, its accomplishments and its failures that are the accumulation of what the people in the district have done in the past. These are realities that cannot be escaped, recorded in the brick and mortar of buildings, in the practices and precedents established by classroom instruction and formal action of the board, and in the memories of men and women and boys and girls who have been stimulated and challenged or disillusioned and disappointed through their school experiences. The school is more than a cluster of classrooms, an organization of pupils, teachers, and administrators, or a series of related instructional programs. It is a crystallization of the educational actions, ideas, and ideals of a community of people expressed in the form of a functional institution. The school board accepts responsibility for the operation of this institution.

The school board's most important responsibility is for what the

school will become. The statement so often made that the school board acts for the people but does not think for the people disposes of an important administrative relationship in terms that are too neatly phrased to be entirely accurate. The school board that quietly waits for a mandate from the people before it acts has relinquished its leadership. Instead of leading it is being pushed and driven or is drifting with the currents of community pressures. The school board that meets its full responsibilities to the people it serves stimulates people to look toward the future, encourages long-term planning, and initiates action that will lead to school improvement. If the school board will not think for the people, then it must accept responsibility for getting the people to think for themselves. What the board does as an agency of community action is vital to the schools because responsibility for decision and action rests with it, but what it encourages the people to do may be more important. Any program envisioned by the board cannot greatly exceed community desire.

In his working relationships with local boards the county superintendent serves them best when he helps them to see and to accept their full responsibility for educational leadership; when he assists them in identifying and clearly defining the basic problems and issues of public education in their districts; and when he aids them in developing the self-confidence and "will-to-do" needed to meet successfully the responsibility which is theirs.

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CHAPTER XII

The Functions of the County Superintendent with Instructional Personnel

One of the cornerstones upon which the success of the educational program depends is the system of relationships established and maintained between the county superintendent, including those people on his immediate staff, and the instructional personnel in the county schools. In the final analysis it is what takes place in the classrooms that really counts. It is there that the county superintendent's efforts come to a full focus.

Thus, the qualities of leadership set forth in Chapter VI, the staff services described in Chapter IX, the patterns of relationships with local schools described in Chapter X, as well as the relationships with boards of education dealt with in the preceding chapter—all in one way or another must contribute to better learning experiences if their ultimate purposes are to be realized. For a school system cannot be improved in any basic way without at the same time, directly or indirectly, improving the learning experiences of the pupils. And the learning experiences of pupils cannot be improved in any fundamental way except as the quality or effectiveness of the teacher's efforts is improved.

Of all the numerous and varied functions a county superintendent has to perform, none are more vital to keeping the schools moving forward than his work with the teaching staff. It has been said that if a county superintendent did nothing more than secure capable teachers

to fill vacant positions each year, he would be worth his salary several times over. But a superintendent who helps teachers each year to grow professionally, in keeping abreast of new educational developments, in making needed school program adaptations, in adapting instruction more closely to pupil needs and improving its quality; who helps teachers feel he is their adviser and counselor rather than their overseer and judge; who helps teachers make their best efforts for the good of the entire school system and helps them achieve a sense of security from work well done—such a school administrator has provided leadership of almost incalculable worth.

UNDERLYING PURPOSE

All the county superintendent's dealings with instructional personnel have a common purpose. That purpose is the improvement of instruction in the schools of the county. This is just as true of the so-called control functions—making recommendations for certification, employment, placement, promotion, evaluation, and dismissal—as it is for services which are directly concerned with the professional growth of teachers while in service. If any function with instructional personnel does not in the end result in improving the quality of instruction, the conclusion is inescapable that it is being misused, misguided, or is not being utilized to the extent its importance to the welfare of the schools warrants.

Admittedly, there are occasions when it is very difficult to keep this purpose uppermost in the minds of all persons concerned. The county superintendent may use it as the guidepost for his actions, but others may fail to see or to concur with his point of view. The anxious father insisting that his son, evaluated by the teacher's college as a very poor prospect, be recommended for employment; the teacher who claims she has taught long enough in a one-teacher school and clamors for the third-grade room in the village school; the teacher who proclaims his fitness for the vacant principalship and tries to arouse community support in his behalf, despite the fact that he has done nothing toward getting a higher certificate or improving himself professionally for the past five years; the teacher who resists dismissal, despite a

record of continuous failure recognized by her associates and community people alike—these are trying situations at best, but the only solution worthy of the county superintendent's leadership must be made in terms of what is best for the children and youth in the schools. Though there may be times when this principle appears under such severe test that temporizing seems the only way out, such resort to expediency seldom brings lasting beneficial results. In fact, the real remedy lies in another direction—toward efforts at helping all people in the community, teachers and laymen alike, to understand the true nature and purpose of the administrator-teacher relationship.

This is easier said than done, as the superintendent of any county-unit system can attest. Sometimes, a given course of action has to be taken which on the surface might appear as an exercise of autocratic control. Actually, it might be exactly the opposite, being nothing more than carrying out a policy which even the teachers themselves helped to establish. Even a system of teacher evaluation can be established and conducted in such a way that fair-minded teachers cannot object to it as a mechanism of control.

It is sometimes held that superintendents of county intermediate districts, because they have no real control over the local districts in the county, can establish sounder working relationships with teachers than can county-unit superintendents. Thus, it is held, the intermediate superintendent can concentrate his efforts on providing needed services to teachers in the local districts without having his dealings clouded with issues arising from his responsibilities for such matters as placement, promotion, evaluation, and dismissal. Of course, many intermediate superintendents advise with local boards and make recommendations on these matters, but, whether they do or do not, this viewpoint overlooks the fact that all aspects of the administrator-teacher relationship, including the so-called control functions of the county superintendent, can be maintained without strife or discord or misunderstanding.

In fact, any assumption that there is any fundamental difference in the purpose or effective exercise of any of the superintendent's functions with the teaching staff rests on shaky ground. All of his functions, whatever their nature, have a common purpose. All of them can like-

wise be exercised in ways that will help to establish and maintain wholesome relationships.

PROCESSES INVOLVED

In a county school system which is guided by principles of school administration, such as those discussed in Chapter X, the superintendent is not only concerned with seeing to it that all his functions with the teaching staff are carried out. Fully realizing that he is dealing with professional people whose welfare, professional future, and effectiveness in the classroom depend heavily on his leadership, he is even more deeply concerned with how he operates in his dealings with teachers or in matters of concern to them. He knows that his functions with teachers are not merely a question of getting the board of education to adopt a set of policies and his putting these policies into operation. He realizes that the entire instructional staff has such a large stake in what happens that their voices should be heard—that ways and means must be established so their views can be presented. Not only that, but he also has sufficient faith in the capability and integrity of the instructional staff to be convinced that better answers will be found when teachers are brought into full-fledged partnership in helping to find them.

In fact, the teaching staff can profitably play a large role in the total framework of policy formulation. Commenting on this, Fowlkes points out that although the superintendent is responsible for leadership in establishing and executing policies of the school system, he is by no means obligated to carry the ball all the time.

Sound school policy can be enjoyed only if responsibility for policy development falls upon every member of the school staff. The educational staff is obligated to participate in policies pertaining to the educational program, and the disposition of materials, plant, and money when these matters impinge directly upon the instructional staff.

It is healthy for teachers to initiate programs of curriculum study and revision. . . . The large purposes of the curriculum must be agreed upon jointly by citizens, school boards, administrators, teachers, and students. But the techniques and procedures through which the purposes of the curriculum are fulfilled must lie in the hands of the teaching staff. . . .

Similarly all staff members should have the active opportunity of participating in the formulation of policy governing the functions which they execute and any others in which there is strong staff interest. In the utilization of a total staff in policy formulation there can be no priority of position or title. Priority can be given only to ideas, brains, abilities, and interests.¹

This view of the process of school administration is gaining widespread acceptance in a growing number of county school systems. It is becoming increasingly common to draw on the assistance of the teachers in such matters as developing the educational specifications for school buildings, planning the budget for the school system, selection of instructional equipment and supplies, constructing salary schedules, and establishing policies concerning sick leave. But probably the most significant practical application of the teamwork process lies in the broad areas of curriculum development and in-service growth of teachers.

These two areas encompass the most important of all the functions the county superintendent exercises in his dealings, and the dealings of his immediate staff members, with the teachers. These functions relating to curriculum development and in-service growth of the teaching staff have such far-reaching importance that this chapter will be largely devoted to them and how they are carried out.

It should be observed that many of the county superintendent's most important functions with the teaching staff cannot be neatly packaged in separate and sharply defined categories. This is certainly true of his functions which are most closely and directly related to improving the school program. Supervision of instruction, curriculum development, in-service teacher education—all overlap in many ways when the process described above is employed. Instructional supervision often involves the teachers in making curriculum adaptations and changes, and always results in the in-service growth of teachers if it is effective; curriculum development programs require instructional supervision and cannot be carried on in an effective way without re-

¹ John Guy Fowlkes, "The Process of Educational Administration," *The School Executive*, September, 1951, pp. 44-45.

sulting in professional in-service growth of teachers; likewise, many in-service teacher education programs are concerned with curriculum development and the services of instructional supervision. There are differences, of course. But more important than dwelling on them is to describe how the county superintendent and his immediate staff function in each area, remembering that each is not a neatly fenced field where he and his supervisory staff may work in different ways and for different purposes.

HELPING TEACHERS GROW

It has been said that a young farmer, holding a B.S. degree in agriculture from his state university, would in five years become a back number unless during that period he continued to make additional preparation while operating his farm. In this respect successful farming is no different than successful teaching, or any other line of work for that matter.

The essential need for continuous professional growth of teachers while in service is so commonly accepted that the complaint, "the teachers' colleges just don't turn out a finished product," infrequently voiced in superintendents' meetings, is certain to evoke discussion, not in criticism of teachers' colleges, but as to what should be done by superintendents in developing in-service teacher education programs. Regardless of the level of preservice preparation or the excellence of that preparation, teachers must continue to grow professionally if the schools are to make progress. Likewise, there can be no doubt about the county superintendent's responsibility in the matter. It is one of his most important functions.

Thus, the only question is how to provide the teachers opportunity for in-service growth. A wide variety of techniques and procedures have been employed, some formal, others informal; some involve coöperative arrangements with colleges and the use of consultants and resource people from outside the county, while others involve the assistance of local people only. However, all that are effective employ the teamwork process, characterized by unity of purpose and a sharing of ideas on what should be done.

EXTENSION COURSES

Usually the most formalized procedures in an in-service teacher education program is the organization of college extension courses in the county. This does not mean that extension course work does not have an important place in some situations or that it cannot become a valuable part of the total in-service program. However, if it does, considerable foresight and initiative are required of the county superintendent.

In the typical county there will be a sizable proportion of teachers who must take additional courses to complete requirements for higher certificates; still others need college credits to apply toward renewal of certificates. In either instance the leadership of the county superintendent pays big dividends when he takes the initiative in determining the courses teachers want; makes the necessary arrangements with the college, insisting that courses offered must be those the teachers want rather than, as sometimes happens, whatever courses the college people feel will be most convenient to offer off-campus; arranges for a meeting place in one of the centrally located schools without charge to the college; makes available any books from the professional library or materials from the curriculum materials center that might be put to good use; and, where the number of teachers enrolling is large, insists that the college furnish an adequate number of instructors (this is sometimes necessary because some colleges, while fixing the minimum number for a class, rarely, if ever, state the maximum).

Even greater opportunities for constructive leadership are frequently afforded, especially when extension courses in professional education are organized. In such instances courses can be adapted to the particular needs of county teachers; using the laboratory approach rather than the textbook-lecture method, specific areas in which teachers feel the need for help are given attention. This procedure is more and more frequently being used to tie in extension courses with other programs and activities of improving the school program. Thus, a course in curriculum development may be made an integral part of the curriculum revision program under way in the county schools;

courses in child development, in materials and methods of instruction, and educational psychology and sociology may likewise be utilized in the same way.

The workshop approach is becoming increasingly common as county superintendents and college people have come to realize that extension courses are most valuable when they deal in practical ways with instructional matters of major concern to teachers in the county. This does not happen without careful advance planning which involves the teachers who are interested, the college instructors and officials concerned, and members of the county superintendent's staff. The latter must of necessity take the initiative in determining what the needs are and in developing the working plans.

A program undertaken by a county-unit school system in West Virginia illustrates the leadership role of the county superintendent and his staff in gearing extension work to county needs. In the summer of 1948 the school system was confronted with a critical shortage of teachers. The superintendent, after canvassing the county, found enough people, some former teachers whose certificates had lapsed and others who had never taught, who were willing to teach but lacked the necessary college credits for obtaining emergency certificates. The county superintendent contacted a nearby college and, explaining the plight of the school system, asked help in organizing a workshop in the county which would do more than just provide opportunity for the emergency teachers to earn the required hours of credit. He wanted the workshop to be geared to the most pressing needs of inexperienced teachers, with demonstrations of teaching methods, grouping pupils for instruction, use of instructional materials and supplies made available by his school system, and how to develop a daily schedule for one-room schools; he wanted the workshop organized in several small groups so instructors could give a large amount of individual help to each teacher; moreover, he wanted the workshop to utilize all the resources his school system had, and agreed to assign one of his assistants to help the college develop the plans. To all this the college readily agreed.

After a number of planning meetings held in the county, the program took shape. Advance registration indicated the exact size of the

group and gave the four workshop instructors background information about each teacher enrolling; arrangements were made to have four groups of pupils, transported by county school buses, on hand two hours each morning throughout the workshop period for demonstration teaching; instructional materials and supplies were assembled in the school to be used as the workshop center; a teacher's library, with professional books from both the college and the county, was set up in a special room; arrangements were made for members of the county superintendent's staff to assist with certain workshop activities.

The outcomes of this coöperative venture, highlighted throughout by the superintendent's knowledge and foresight of what was needed and his initiative in shaping the program to those needs, were characterized by features such as these: more than seventy teachers arranged in four groups on the basis of their background and the school grades they would be teaching that year; a workshop instructor for each group; daily demonstration teaching by each instructor, illustrating instructional methods, procedures, and organization, followed by group discussion; use of the county professional library; instruction in how to make effective use of the pupils' library, the art, music, and other instructional supplies furnished by the county system; practice in keeping the pupil's attendance register, in keeping other records and making reports, in organizing daily instructional activities; and opportunity to learn firsthand about the services available from each member of the county superintendent's staff.

Although this program for emergency teachers employed workshop techniques, it did not involve the teachers in all the stages of planning that characterize most workshops, the reason being that the participants lacked a background of teaching experience for knowing what their specific professional needs might be. However, a highly distinguishing characteristic of most workshops is the degree that they are teacher-planned.

WORKSHOPS

Partnership participation in planning and conducting their in-service growth activities becomes a reality for teachers in workshops held in many county school systems. But such participation does not come ex-

cept under the careful nurture of sound leadership processes. Many a workshop would have been little more than just another textbook-lecture type of extension class, or just another cut-and-dried conference dealing with topics someone felt teachers needed information about, without the vital spark of educational leadership that kindled the interests of teachers and with their help fused the program around their needs.

An excellent illustration of the kind of leadership that fosters this partnership participation in workshops happened in Los Angeles County, California, where it is customary near the close of the school term each year for teachers, principals, and members of the county superintendent's staff to sit down together in informal conference groups and evaluate the year's work, plan for professional summer activities, and discuss ways for improving instruction the next school year.² One spring the teachers from fourteen schools in a rural part of the county suggested among other things a number of specific ways they would like to continue to work together on common problems the following year, including institutes, area meetings, and an extension course organized around some of their major problems in teaching the social studies. Later, a representative committee met with members of the county superintendent's staff and helped set up and make arrangements for the various group activities; institutes and group meetings were scheduled and the extension course was arranged for with the state university. Fall came. Forty teachers registered for the course. During the first meeting, under the leadership of one of the county supervisors, the teachers reexamined the problems discussed that spring, suggested modifications in some, and then classified them. The final list would have made an excellent outline of topics for a lecture-textbook extension course. But the teachers were also given responsibility for determining class procedures, thereby avoiding that pitfall. The result was an informal workshop experience providing rich opportunities for teacher growth. The professional library especially arranged for the workshop was put to good use, films were shown, demonstration lessons were taught, experiments were tried out

² Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, *Group Processes in Supervision*, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1948, pp. 98-104.

in classrooms, community resources were identified, various service agencies were contacted and their officials interviewed. From this variety of experiences came a wealth of information, of techniques, and procedures which were weighed and evaluated in informal group discussion. Thus, because of far-sighted leadership, what might have been nothing more than just another extension course became a rich experience in professional growth.

Although the use of workshops is becoming increasingly common in in-service teacher education programs, it must be admitted that some of them are little more than workshops in name only. The benefits from workshop processes will not be fully achieved when members of the county superintendent's staff plus a few principals in the county, however expert and well informed they may be, decide what is needed and develop the plans. Larger, more lasting benefits will come when procedures such as the following are employed:

1. The workshop emerges in response to a felt need of teachers for assistance in improving instruction. In this, there is a large leadership role on the part of the county superintendent's staff in helping teachers to identify their needs, not by telling teachers what they need, but through processes of self-evaluation and appraisals of the situations where they work.
2. The decision that a workshop might be a good procedure, instead of a formal type of conference or extension courses, should come from the teachers concerned. This does not mean that supervisors should not plant the seed of the idea here and there where it will be most likely to take root and grow. However, "now that you've told us what your problems are, what you need is a good workshop" will not foster the partnership participation which should characterize every good workshop.
3. Teachers should have an active part in shaping workshop plans—when and where it will be held; the facilities that will be needed, such as a large room where chairs can be arranged in a circle, rooms for meetings of small groups and special committees; the materials that will be needed; and the consultants to be invited.
4. Plans should mature unhurriedly, permitting ample time for arranging all major details. Committees, appointed by the teachers them-

selves, with the assistance of the county superintendent's staff, should be given responsibility for shaping up the program.

5. All teachers involved, as well as everyone who will be engaged in the undertaking, should be encouraged to make adequate preparation. Vaguely defined problems waste valuable workshop time and may result in aimless groping and wandering unless sharpened into reasonably clear-cut form beforehand. This does not mean everything should be cut and dried before the workshop begins. It should not be that inflexible. But there should be sufficient definiteness of pattern and content so that everyone attending can think through with some degree of certainty how he may be benefited and the preparation he should make in advance to derive the most benefit.
6. Better results will be gained if the workshop opens with a reëxamination of the problems and topics to be dealt with, making whatever modifications or changes seem desirable, and breaking all problem areas into specifics which can be attacked in a concerted way.
7. A variety of procedures should be employed, all of them informal in nature. Free unstructured discussions by the entire group, "buzz sessions," dividing into small groups when the situation warrants it, reading and making reports on specific problems, committees or groups working on problems of particular interest to them, demonstrations of good practice, use of exhibits, visits to locate instructional resources, use of consultants as advisers and resource people rather than as lecturers expounding ready-made answers—these are some of the procedures which give vitality and value.
8. The program should be flexible so that modifications can be made when desirable. It often happens that the best-laid plans do not unfold as anticipated; some areas may not require so much attention, others may require more; relationships among areas may be discovered, requiring changes in plans; some areas may be explored and set aside to be dealt with as a follow-up after the workshop ends.
9. Evaluations should be made from time to time by the entire group. Questions such as these should be frankly faced and answered: Is everyone taking an active part? How well are we getting along in working out solutions to the problems which brought us together? How effective are the procedures we have been using? What improvement should be made in the processes we have been using?
10. A definite plan of follow-up should be made before the workshop ends. This follow-up might become a part of the total in-service pro-

gram, involving the assistance of the instructional supervisor; it might call for experimentation in some of the classrooms; organization of a study group to continue work on some particular area; a series of group meetings might be held to reinforce and extend the benefits gained. No workshop should be an end in itself. It should stimulate a search for ways and means for continued sharing of ideas.

PRESCHOOL CONFERENCES

During the last decade there has been a steady shift away from the old type of teachers' meeting held each fall just before the schools opened and featuring an inspirational address by an imported speaker, explanations of administrative matters by the county superintendent, and reports by the supervisors about new instructional materials being provided, with the day's activities winding up in business meetings of the county teachers' and principals' associations. Undoubtedly, such meetings served useful purposes, but, with the growing realization of the importance of in-service programs for teachers, the preschool meeting is being replaced by conferences or workshops frequently lasting two or three days, or occasionally for a school week.

The opening of the school term is a strategic time for orienting both old and new teachers to the new school year. It is a good time to initiate new developments in the in-service program, to give teachers and supervisors opportunity to develop plans for in-service activities, to discuss improvements in the instructional program to be made immediately. There will be various administrative matters which should come up for discussion, but these are strongly overshadowed by the emphasis on teacher participation in group activities dealing with the instructional program. Any administrative matters—instructions in making reports, explanations of school bus schedules, state department of education regulations affecting teachers, school board policies—that need not come up for lengthy discussion are incorporated in bulletins and handed to teachers with perhaps a brief oral explanation, thereby making it possible to give the maximum amount of time to instructional matters. When addresses are featured as a part of the conference program, they tie in with the major theme of the conference or deal

with some specific topic to be discussed by the teachers in their group meetings.

In fact, the preschool conference has become an integral part of the total in-service program in a number of counties, actually becoming the first major activity of that program each school year. For example, the conference held at the opening of school in Arlington County, Virginia, is one of three held during the year. The second is held later in the school term when teachers can come together, evaluate what they have accomplished, and plan ahead for the coming months. The third is held near the end of the year to evaluate the year's work and to plan for the coming year.

Actually, the preschool conference, when soundly planned and conducted, may itself open up additional avenues for group action either in work conferences held during the school term or at its close. The experience of the school system in Bulloch County, Georgia, illustrates the point.³ In 1944 the first preschool conference was held, a three-day workshop-type meeting which the teachers helped plan and in which everyone actively participated in discussing major instructional problems and ways of dealing with them. So much enthusiasm was aroused that during the ensuing school year, study groups composed of teachers, pupils, and parents were organized in each of the thirteen communities in the county and held monthly meetings to make plans for needed school improvements. Another result was the establishment of a teacher education committee, having a representative from each school in the county, to study the in-service needs of teachers and to propose plans for meeting these needs. This committee, assisted by the county superintendent's staff, planned the next preschool conference to run for a full week instead of three days. With continued progress, a plan was developed whereby each school faculty held conferences with pupils and parents at the close of each school term, then, after spending the following day evaluating the year's work in the local school, came together the next day in a countywide meeting to make further evaluations and to plan for the next year.

³ Sue Snipes, "How One County Plans and Evaluates," *Educational Leadership*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D.C., December, 1947, pp. 179-184.

Out of this three-year experience in cooperative planning and group action emerged five major concepts:

There should be no fixed pattern of organization for pre-school and post-school planning. The pattern should be flexible so that it may be adapted to current needs and immediate changes.

Planning should be done in terms of problems recognized by teachers as individuals as well as by teachers of local and county—or even larger—units.

There should be constant evaluation of work done in order to see progress in individual and group undertakings so that additional plans for next steps may be developed.

As much as possible, leadership should come from teachers themselves; however, consultative services of others should be called in as needed.

There should be key people to serve in such consultative capacity on the county level while the principal or an outstanding teacher may serve to advantage on the local level.⁴

Planning the conference is sometimes started during the previous school year and is continued during the summer vacation. Thus, in Breathitt County, Kentucky,⁵ during an informal teachers' meeting, plans were initiated for the preschool conference the following fall, with major emphasis to be given to demonstrations of teaching in rural schools followed by group discussions, each group to be organized on the basis of the location and type of school in which the teachers taught. A steering committee of teachers and the supervisor developed the plans during the summer, with this purpose in mind: "to continue with the program of work as outlined by the pre-school work conference in 1946, and to show some ways by which pupils, teachers, and parents can plan for the total improvement of the school." Fall came and plans for the conference were ready. Each morning of the week demonstrations with thirty pupils from all grade levels illustrated techniques and procedures in which teachers had expressed need for assistance, followed by group discussions in which parents and representatives from all county agencies took part at various times. At the

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

⁵ Marcia Everett (ed.), *The Rural Supervisor at Work*, Yearbook of the Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1949, pp. 109-110.

end of the week teachers stated the experience had been more valuable than any other kind of meeting they had ever attended.

In 1950 major emphasis was given in the Cache County, Utah, preschool workshop to utilization of community resources in the instructional program. In developing the conference plans it was discovered that many teachers did not know the county and its resources. This lack became a major area for emphasis; materials were collected for exhibits; representatives of local agencies, organizations, and businesses as well as other community leaders were contacted and their help enlisted in acquainting teachers better with the county. One full day of the conference was spent in making a tour of the county in school buses with stops at major points of interest—businesses and governmental agencies in the county seat, sugar-beet refineries and a cheese factory out in the county, soil conservation projects, a reforestation and watershed conservation project, turkey and dairy farms—where the major features of each was explained by the businessman or official in charge. The results of the conference could be found that year in practically every classroom in the county.⁶

IN-TERM CONFERENCES AND INSTITUTES

While the preschool conference offers almost unparalleled opportunities to the county superintendent in helping teachers get off to a good start early in the school year, many are finding that work conferences or institutes patterned on the workshop approach are highly useful in helping teachers when held sometime during the school year. In fact, as already indicated, the preschool conference may be the first of a series of two, three, or sometimes even more countywide meetings and may provide valuable opportunities as a follow-up of the preschool meeting, to evaluate progress made during the year, and to develop plans for continued improvements.

As with workshops and preschool conferences, there is no set pattern to be followed, except that the processes used should always involve teacher participation—both in the planning and on the program itself—to the maximum extent practicable. Frequently, experts in some particular field may profitably be featured on the program,

⁶ Reported by Bernell Winn, Supervisor, Cache County Schools, Logan, Utah.

as in Burlington County, New Jersey, where a few years ago a guidance specialist from a nearby university addressed a county teachers' institute and aroused so much interest that a special committee of teachers was appointed to explore guidance needs in the county and to recommend a program of action. The result was a countywide emphasis on developing better guidance programs in the elementary as well as the high schools.⁷

In some instances county teachers' institutes of the old type—characterized by inspirational or educational speakers, or both, addressing the teachers, without opportunity for group participation—have become so firmly entrenched that it is difficult to change them into more useful instruments for in-service growth. This problem was confronted in Vigo County, Indiana, where four days of county institutes each year are authorized by the state board of education. A steering committee of teachers was appointed to develop plans for the program. Questionnaires setting forth the details of proposed plans and inviting additional suggestions were sent to all teachers in the county. Enthusiastic support was gained for the proposed program of group meetings, panel discussions, and workshop-type activities.⁸ In this case the county superintendent working by himself might have developed identical programs or others equally good. But, realizing that the problem was to get the teachers to accept changes in long-established patterns, he enlisted their help in deciding what should be done because he knew they would accept what they as a group proposed.

SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTION—A HELPING-TEACHER SERVICE

So much emphasis has been given in the previous section to a very limited number of procedures that it should be observed at once that these are by no means the only methods the county superintendent and his staff employ in helping teachers to grow professionally. In actual practice those already described, even though highly important when

⁷ Shirley Cooper (ed.), *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, Yearbook of the Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1950, p. 116.

⁸ Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction, *Leadership at Work*, Fifteenth Yearbook, the Department, Washington, D.C., 1943, pp. 184-185.

soundly used, constitute but one part of the total program of in-service teacher education. Another vitally important part of that program is supervision of instruction.

Again, it is important to recall the impossibility of encompassing supervision of instruction in a neatly fenced-in category. For good supervision, in one way or another, operates throughout the entire range of in-service growth activities. Helping arrange for better-planned extension courses; helping develop workshops of various types; helping organize preschool, postschool, and other work conferences and institutes; helping teachers with curriculum development projects; helping teachers through classroom visitations, teaching demonstration lessons, arranging visits to other schools, searching for instructional materials, holding group meetings; advising, counseling, encouraging, suggesting, but never demanding or directing that thus and so be done—it is no wonder that the work of a good supervisor of instruction is called a helping-teacher service. There is a growing movement to call those providing this service "helping teachers" or "consultants" rather than "supervisors" because of the connotations of the latter term with overseeing and with the issuing of directions to be followed.

Regardless of whether the county superintendent himself does whatever supervising that is done, as still is the case in many counties,⁹ or whether it is done by an instructional supervisor on his staff, the process is the same. However, because supervision of instruction is so generally regarded as one of the functions requiring the services of a specially trained professional leader, and because of the rapid growth during recent years in the number of supervisors employed in county school systems—both county-unit and county intermediate—it will be discussed in the light of how a good supervisor functions rather than as an instructional leadership function of a county superintendent having no professional people on his staff. Nonetheless, it should be

⁹ During the 1950-1951 school year there were 1291 counties, about 42 percent of the total, that had at least one general supervisor each. Some of these had more than one, as indicated by the fact that in that year there was a total of 2501 general county supervisors. Jane Franseth, *Status of County School Supervision in the United States, 1950-51*, U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C., 1951 (unpublished material), 15 pages.

observed that some county superintendents, within the limitations imposed by the great variety of demands on their time, function in the same way in helping teachers that instructional supervisors do.

THE SUPERVISORY PROCESS

The processes involved are so closely and vitally associated with the daily work of teachers—their successes or failures in it, and the feelings of insecurity or uncertainty which may come when their efforts are subjected to close scrutiny—that supervisors, if they are to be most effective, must give careful attention to how they carry on their work.

Establishing good human relationships is a first and continuing concern. This requires working with teachers, not over them; accepting them as professional people, not as mere employees; treating them as equals, not as lesser beings; encouraging them to become self-reliant and creative, not to become dependent; helping them to find ways to help themselves, not to expect ready-made answers handed to them. This concern for developing wholesome relationships is deeply grounded in the conviction that, fundamentally, professional improvement comes from within. It can never be imposed from without. The supervisor does not change teachers for the better. All that supervision does is to help create opportunities for growth and improvement which teachers see the need for and want.

The real test of whether sound relationships have been established comes not from the industry of the supervisor and the variety of techniques and procedures employed but from how the teachers themselves view the supervisory process and from what they expect of it. It must be wanted by teachers if it is to be effective. When teachers understand what good supervision is, how it can help them, then there is little question about their wanting it.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

It would be difficult to overstress the importance of establishing the conditions for a fruitful program of instructional supervision. When teachers have been supervised by the overseeing method and are suspicious and distrustful, or if they do not understand the true

functions of supervision, laying the groundwork for a good program may be a difficult but very necessary first step.

An example¹⁰ of how a new supervisor worked in a county initiating a supervisory program for the first time illustrates some of the procedures involved in establishing rapport with the teachers and building the foundation for the program. The first year's work involved these specific steps:

1. Becoming thoroughly acquainted with the educational program in the schools of the county and with the resources in each school community.
2. Making informal visits to each classroom to get acquainted with the teachers, to establish friendship with them, to discover some common interest, and to develop common points of view.
3. Making very few suggestions for improvement, except incidentally or when assistance on some specific problem was requested.
4. Developing the "helping teacher" concept by bringing teachers various types of instructional aids and helping them to locate others.
5. Doing demonstration teaching, on request, and teaching the pupils new songs and games.
6. Encouraging teachers to request assistance when they felt she could be of help.
7. Making more and more classroom visits on request of the teachers, as the months passed.
8. Helping organize and hold group teachers meetings without being "out in front taking the lead."
9. Consulting frequently with the county superintendent concerning educational needs in the county and ways of meeting these needs.

Such a course of action is slow and time-consuming. Often observable results do not emerge for several months or longer. But the necessity for first establishing a readiness for supervision based on sound relationships more than justifies the time it may require. In fact, this readiness is a vital part of supervision and must be present during all stages of development of a supervisory program. If at any time teachers do not want supervision or see the need for it, then it is time

¹⁰ William T. Melchoir, *Instructional Supervision*, D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, 1950, pp. 81-82.

to examine and strengthen the relationships upon which its success depends.

Of course, as every experienced county superintendent knows, there are nearly always a few members of the teaching staff who, from sheer self-satisfaction, indifference, or plain laziness, avoid having the supervisor observe them teach and discuss their problems and never participate freely in meetings, study groups, and curriculum development projects. Sometimes, the problems occasioned by a very few may for the time being appear much greater in relation to the total in-service program than is actually the case. In such instances the remedy lies not in establishing one set of procedures for those teachers genuinely desiring assistance and another pattern, compulsive in nature, for those who are unwilling to cooperate. For in the end all teachers will see that the compulsive procedures become the real foundation upon which the program ultimately rests. A far safer course of action is to accept the problem as a challenge to be squarely faced and solved through efforts to locate the causes and insofar as possible help to overcome these causes whatever their nature. It is always safe to assume that all teachers want to succeed and that all teachers, with an occasional exception here and there, will do their part in carrying on a program which rests on the firm foundation of wholesome human relationships. Indeed, it will be better to ignore completely the exceptional few and to work entirely with those willing to cooperate than to resort to authoritative methods which would undermine the teamwork processes employed in working with the great majority.

TEAMWORK WITH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

In counties where the schools have been consolidated into good-sized attendance centers, the group activities of a faculty working together on common problems become a highly significant means for in-service growth and for improving the instructional program. However, the county superintendent's functions in helping teachers in the larger schools improve by no means end with seeing to it that they have principals capable of giving high-quality educational leadership.

Nevertheless, developing and maintaining good instructional leadership in each school is, in and of itself, a highly important function

directly affecting the teachers. In all the county-unit states and in some states where the county is the intermediate district, this is recognized as an important responsibility of the county superintendent and his staff. School principals, like teachers and even county superintendents, must have opportunities for in-service growth if the quality of their leadership is maintained at a high level. This requires far more than helping principals become more proficient in the purely administrative aspects of their jobs. It involves helping them become more proficient in instructional leadership—in getting a better knowledge of their local communities and the educational needs of the pupils, in gaining a better understanding of the kind of educational programs the pupils in their communities need, and in becoming more effective in their ways of working with teachers to provide the kind of school program needed. Such leadership on the part of principals is deeply concerned with helping teachers to grow while in service.

In fact, this kind of leadership can become instructional supervision probably at its best. No amount or variety of services provided directly by the county superintendent's staff, however large it may be, can fully substitute for the instructional leadership a high-quality principal can provide for his teachers.

However, this does not mean that capable principals do not need and cannot make effective use of the services of the county superintendent's staff. No principal, however capable, is sufficient unto himself as an educational leader. One good measure of his effectiveness is the extent to which he utilizes resources from outside the school, including all those available from the county superintendent's staff, in helping his teachers improve. In turn, the county superintendent and his staff can in large degree measure the effectiveness of their functions with teachers working under principals by the degree to which the principal accepts and utilizes their services.

Thus, a three-way highly interrelated process of improvement is involved. The county superintendent and his staff help principals improve their leadership with full knowledge that it will never become self-sufficient in providing all the professional services the teachers will need for continued growth. As principals improve they find increased opportunities for making effective use of services from the

county level. When that happens, the county superintendent's staff has opened avenues for helping teachers, not only by improving the principal's abilities to provide instructional leadership, but by supplementing his services in whatever ways that may be needed.

TEAMWORK THROUGH GROUP ACTION

As already indicated, the county superintendent's functions in helping teachers improve are exercised in a variety of ways. Countywide workshops, conferences of various types, extension courses, school faculty meetings—all make valuable contributions to that end. But, however important these procedures may be, they do not provide all the opportunities for working together in groups which teachers in the county should have.

In the first place, there is an ever-present need for frequent cross-fertilization of ideas among schools. Even in large schools the teachers need to know about promising new developments in other schools of the county; they need frequent contact with those in other schools teaching the same grade or subject to discuss common problems and ways of dealing with them. Moreover, any curriculum development projects that might be undertaken on a countywide basis would, of necessity, involve teachers from several schools working together in small groups.

In the second place, a great many counties still have sizable numbers of one-room schools whose teachers have an even greater need for the benefits that can come from working together in small groups with the leadership and guidance of good supervision. In fact, the large number of teachers the average county supervisor has to work with makes it necessary, if she is to reach them oftener than three or four times yearly, that she have them come together in small groups occasionally. Thus, the county may be divided into several areas or localities, each with ten to twenty-five teachers who meet with the supervisor every month or six weeks. The plan has many advantages beyond that of enabling the supervisor to reach the teachers oftener. Their active participation in the meetings has potentialities for growth which would be difficult to duplicate by other techniques. In many respects, the experience of working together, sharing ideas, and de-

veloping plans for improvements to be undertaken in each school gives teachers the values of group effort that characterize well-planned faculty meetings in a large school.

Often the meetings develop as a result of preschool conferences held at the beginning of the year, with each group carrying out the plans for improvement set up at that time. Each group varies its approach in terms of the desires and particular needs of the teachers involved. Typically, a wide variety of procedures are used to make group activities more helpful and stimulating. Demonstration lessons, informal discussions, reports of new methods being tried out, examination and sharing of teaching materials, observing each other's work by holding meetings in different schools each time, work sessions to develop some particular device such as a self-evaluation guide, planning sessions for making surveys of local resources that might be utilized in their instruction, drawing on the supervisor for advice and counsel, utilizing other resources from the county superintendent's office—all these bring rich rewards through group efforts which make every teacher a member of a closely knit working team.

Frequently, these small-group meetings have become such an important avenue for in-service growth that a half-day period of school time is set aside for them every month or six weeks. This has obvious advantages both for the teachers and for busy supervisors. In counties where the values of an in-service program are understood by the board of education and lay people, it is usually possible to make such arrangements without undue criticism. Of course, there are practical limits on how much school time can reasonably be given to in-service activities. Many county superintendents feel, with considerable justification, that teachers as professional people should be willing to hold at least a part of their meetings after school hours or on Saturdays. Certainly this would appear to be a sound procedure in situations where small groups meet frequently, as is often the case with curriculum revision projects. In fact, when the supervisory program becomes firmly established and teachers begin to harvest the benefits of working together on common problems, the question of holding meetings after school does not often become an important issue. This is illustrated in a report of the supervisory program in Warren County, New Jersey:

Voluntary after-school meetings have taken many forms. One year all teachers in the helping teacher districts met together twice a month. They divided into nine groups organized to meet their requests. Each group selected its own chairman and planned how it would work. Each helping teacher (supervisor) took responsibility for three groups. Between meetings the helping teachers worked with the chairman of their groups. They developed social studies and science units and enjoyed hobbies, games, dances, and crafts. The teachers were their own resource people and taught each other what they knew. Some nights the parent-teacher association served supper to those who wanted to stay later; these evening meetings were always gala occasions.¹¹

In the same county, Saturday-morning teaching demonstrations were at one time a major group activity. Half-day demonstrations were held in some school where a teacher volunteered to teach on Saturday morning instead of Friday. The supervisor assisted the hostess teacher in planning the program, which usually was developed around some aspect of the curriculum being emphasized in the county. Informal discussions led by the supervisor followed the demonstration. Another activity has involved every teacher being visited in her classroom by a small group of teachers at some time during the year. Some of these are held after school when a group of teachers from nearby schools "drop in, look around, chat awhile, and have a cup of tea."¹² The determining factor is not whose time—the teacher's or the school system's—is being consumed, but the value of the experience. When real opportunities for growth are present, the question of whose time is at stake becomes relatively unimportant.

INDIVIDUAL HELP

Every teacher encounters classroom situations where the advice of a trusted and capable professional counselor is needed. The nature of these situations varies greatly and so do the reactions of teachers concerning them. Without intending an oversimplification of an extremely complex matter, some of the more obvious and common types of situations follow:

¹¹ Marcia Everett (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 86.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 85.

1. Sometimes perplexing and disturbing classroom problems arise which must be solved if continued progress is to be made. The teacher realizes that assistance from a fellow professional worker would be helpful in finding a satisfactory solution. She wants that help just as soon as she can get it.
2. With some teachers similar problem situations arise, often more serious when discovered, which they avoid confronting in a forthright way. They may realize something is wrong, but they do not analyze the nature of the difficulty and, most important, they rarely seek professional help. A common example is the teacher who over a period of months has let classroom discipline deteriorate to the point where noisy confusion and a mild state of anarchy reigns, but would be the last to suggest to a visitor that the situation is out of hand.
3. Occurring far more frequently, fortunately, is the type of situation having no crisis characteristics, even of minor nature. Nothing more has happened than the teacher has reached a point in some aspect of her work where the best next step is not readily apparent to her. She may have thought the matter through, seeing several possible approaches, but is unsure which to take. She needs professional advice and realizes the need for it. She would like to have it then and there, not next month or the month after that.
4. Still occurring far too frequently in some county school systems is the type of situation, similar in some major respects to the one above, where professional advice and counsel would be most helpful but the teacher does not seek it when it could be of most help. The sixth-grade class may be bogged down in division of common fractions, but instead of seeking the supervisor's help the teacher, even though unsure of what to do, continues to struggle along. The teacher is not necessarily insecure; she just does not realize how professional help could be of benefit. By the time the supervisor drops in three months later, the pupils have moved on to decimals and the situation is buried in the past, only most likely to be resurrected the next year with another group of sixth-graders.
5. Coming to nearly all good teachers, usually quite frequently, is the type of situation where a visit from the supervisor would be most welcome. No major problem exists. In fact, everything is moving along even better than last year. The pupils are happy and making good progress, the parents are pleased, and the teacher looks ahead with a confidence born of work well done and faith in her ability to do even better as she con-

tinues to grow professionally. But, nonetheless, it would be good to have the supervisor come and see how well things are moving. Teaching ought to be viewed at its best as well as when special difficulties arise. Improvement in teaching comes not only from overcoming weaknesses as they emerge but making your best even better.

6. Then there is the type of situation where the teacher, whether for reasons of insecurity or otherwise, simply does not want anyone to observe her teach. Classroom visitations by the supervisor are studiously avoided. If the supervisor should drop in when classes are in session, she should be prepared to expect an icy welcome. All classroom activity may halt abruptly and the look from the front of the room telegraphs the message: "Now what do you want, coming in here while I am busy?" Sometimes, the frigidity of the welcome is sugar-coated with: "This is our social studies period; won't you take over?" or a dozen obvious questions having equally obvious answers may be asked to kill time. This is a more common type of situation, existing at least to some degree, than might be expected. Fortunate indeed is the county school system where it does not exist at all or where, if it did exist, the supervisor over a period of time has been sufficiently adroit to deal with it successfully.

The above classification may be oversimplified in some respects and certainly is not intended to be all-inclusive. However, it is sufficiently well grounded in fact and in the practical realities of working with teachers to draw some major conclusions.

That all teachers occasionally need individualized help from the supervisor is beyond question. With all the benefits that come to teachers from working together in groups, there still remains a large area of need for the supervisor to work with teachers in their classrooms. There is good reason why most supervisors spend the major portion of their time in the classroom working with the teacher and helping her improve.

However, if the differences noted in the above classifications have any validity whatever, they indicate very clearly that the supervisor must be far more than a trouble-shooter or a mere diagnostician and a dispenser of prescriptions for instructional ailments. There are times, of course, when that role must be assumed. The situation may require just that and the teacher needs and expects to get that kind of assist-

ance. But this particular role, essential though it may be at times, is overshadowed by a larger, more important, more vital role.

For the supervisor's primary concern in giving individual help through her visits to the classrooms is helping teachers grow professionally. Her ultimate concern is, of course, pupil growth, but she realizes that to achieve an effective rate and quality of pupil growth there must first be teacher growth. This concern is not confined to teachers having troublesome difficulties, whether they frankly recognize them or ignore them; nor is it confined to overcoming instructional shortcomings, recognized or unrecognized by the teachers concerned. It is not confined to those desiring help, but includes all teachers. Because the ultimate concern is pupil growth through teacher growth, the supervisor seeks out the strengths of teachers and helps them build upon these. When weaknesses appear they are given attention, but the emphasis is on helping to make the good even better.

This emphasis requires a frontal attack. It cannot be achieved by the Pollyanna method of observing the teacher at work for an hour, then in the discussion following enumerating "the good things seen" and turning to points where "you could have done better." That sugar-coated approach to faultfinding is so obvious that it only digs a chasm between "good things" and "things not so good," with the latter looming, sometimes forbiddingly, above the former. When the concern is teacher growth, then the emphasis must very largely be concentrated precisely on those things where the greatest amount of growth has already been achieved.

Thus, teachers should be visited when they are at their best, not at their worst. The excellent teacher just completing with her pupils a highly successful unit of work may easily draw far greater value from a visit by her supervisor than another who, having an "off day," is struggling through a class period under the watchful eyes, however sympathetic, of the supervisor who "just dropped in to observe for an hour." If teachers know that the supervisor does everything she can always to see them at their best, then "trouble-shooting," when the need for it arises, can be done honestly and forthrightly. There will be no need to sugar-coat it.

Moreover, if teachers receive the kind of assistance they need and

when they need it most, then the supervisor cannot follow a set visitation schedule. It will have to be sufficiently flexible so that teachers can be visited when the greatest amount of assistance can be rendered. It would seem to follow that all visits, except in rare instances where some compelling reason requires otherwise, should be made only on the invitation of the teacher. A growing number of school systems are following that practice.

Of course, as noted earlier some teachers shy away from inviting the supervisor. Obviously, the problem is to "get invited," but there is no easy and ready-made solution. It is highly questionable whether going uninvited would establish the rapport that is essential. Probably a better approach would be to apply the same principles here that characterize the supervisor's relationships with the teachers actively seeking her assistance through classroom visitation. In other words, concentrate on the areas of greatest growth whenever these become apparent in other situations where the supervisor and such teachers may be together—in group meetings, in workshops, in the supervisor's office, or even in nonprofessional gatherings. This is not a "soft-soaping" process; the supervisor merely takes whatever opportunities that come to be of assistance, knowing full well that in the great majority of instances other avenues, including classroom visitation, will open up when such teachers clearly understand that her only concern is to be of help.

It should be added that the classroom visitation technique, even though possessing tremendous potentialities for fostering teacher growth, is not the only method for giving individual help effectively. There are times when the teacher can just as profitably come to the supervisor's office and get whatever assistance she needs. Perhaps all that is needed is some help on planning the next social studies unit, some advice on dealing with the deviate behavior of a pupil, or suggestions about modifying the daily schedule of classroom activities. In fact, there are some occasions when more can be gained if the teacher comes to the supervisor than if the supervisor goes to the teacher. Moreover, many supervisors actively encourage these office visits, especially where a curriculum materials bureau has been established, as a means for making classroom visitations more effective.

The assistance given there often results in requests by teachers to visit their classrooms. However, it is by no means a substitute for observing the teachers at work and working with them there. There is no satisfactory substitute for classroom visitation. Other techniques and procedures may supplement its values but they do not supplant them.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Any effective program of instructional supervision is, as mentioned earlier, very directly concerned with the nature and quality of pupils' learning experiences in the schools. Although the ultimate purpose is pupil growth, it is very largely achieved through processes involving teacher growth. Thus, as teachers improve in their work, the nature and quality of the pupils' learning experiences are likewise improved. Unless the latter happens, there has been no real professional growth among teachers. Moreover, the degree to which pupils' learning experiences have been improved measures the success of the program of instructional supervision.

The curriculum is commonly defined as the learning experiences in the school that are provided for pupils under the guidance of a teacher. Curriculum development is concerned with improving the nature and quality of these learning experiences. This involves not only making needed changes and modifications improving the quality of experiences already being provided but also adding new experiences as changes in our society bring new educational needs. Thus, it is readily apparent that curriculum development is a larger and more vital task than is characterized by occasional preparation of a printed course of study or curriculum bulletins. Equally apparent is the growing conviction in every section of the country that here is a task of first magnitude confronting county school systems.

CONSTANT EFFORT REQUIRED

If living conditions of our people were as static and unchanging as those of a Micronesian tribe on a Central Pacific island, then there would be no need for curriculum development. Once established, the curriculum would need no change or modification. But with us, as noted in some detail in Chapter II, profoundly significant changes have

come in our ways of living and are continuing to come, bringing new demands on the schools. Change, the lifeblood of social progress, is all about us and school programs must constantly be adapted to prepare young people to deal with it effectively. New additions to the curriculum in both elementary and secondary schools reflect this adaptation to increased demands on the county schools. Who could have said with certainty four decades ago that today high school youth would be given driver education or that science and safety would be taught in elementary schools?

But the demands of our rapidly changing society must be met by the schools in other ways than merely tacking an occasional new course or subject to the curriculum. The vast amount of research and experimentation in teaching methodology, in the study of child growth and development, and in curriculum content each year brings new knowledge for improving the quality of the learning experiences of pupils. Old practices are changed and made better. New teaching devices appear—instructional films, radio, television. Improvements are made in old materials—more and better textbooks and library books, children's magazines, and other instructional aids. New ways are being found to make learning experiences which are a vital part of our cultural heritage more meaningful and more easily and directly applied to the practical affairs of everyday living.

So much is at stake in keeping the school program closely attuned to pupil needs and in finding better ways to serve those needs that no school system, whatever its size or location, can afford to rest on its oars content with the status quo. Unless there is constant improvement, the program is certain to drift into stagnation instead of thrusting forward in the swift stream of life it is dedicated to serve.

THE TEACHER'S ROLE

Curriculum development in the county school system is not a job for specialized experts alone, although on occasion they have a rightful place in it. Neither is it alone the job of the county supervisor, nor even of the curriculum director and his staff members in large counties having such professional people, even though their efforts are concentrated in that area. The classroom teachers, not just a select

few of the best ones in the county but all of them, have a vital role in curriculum development.

If there ever was a time when teachers were not considered to have an important part in curriculum development, that time has long since past. In tracing the development of organized curriculum programs, Caswell¹³ found that even in early curriculum programs it was common practice to have representative committees of teachers assist in preparing courses of study. As progress came, the larger role of teachers, extending far beyond the preparation of courses of study, emerged.

The logical conclusion was recognized that all teachers are inevitably engaged in curriculum development, and consequently, if the maximum effort on the curriculum of a school system is to be realized the program must provide for the participation of all, not just for selected representatives. Thus it has come to be widely accepted that the primary means of changing the curriculum is through changing teachers. Teachers generally do the best job of which they are capable; as a rule they do those things which they believe are important and relatively of greatest value. They cannot change their practice like taking off an old coat and putting on a new one. They must have a conviction that change is desirable and will result in improvement and must learn how to guide the new curriculum as proposed. Each teacher must participate in order to develop this essential basis for improving practice.

This conviction, born of long experience, is today being given a practical application in an increasing number of county school systems. Teachers are busy in many ways in improving the nature and quality of the learning experiences of pupils in the county schools. With the assistance of capable educational leadership from the county superintendent's staff, teachers are operating on the "growing edge" of educational progress.

METHODS

There was a time in many school systems when mention of a curriculum development program evoked visions of the arduous task of

¹³ Hollis L. Caswell and associates, *Curriculum Improvement in Public School Systems*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1950, p. 48.

collecting, sorting, and assembling a mass of information to be published as a course of study which all schools would be expected to follow. Even today there are instances where the major emphasis is placed on production of curriculum manuals and bulletins, each dealing with some particular aspect of the school program. However, there is a growing tendency to regard curriculum development in broader, more realistic, and certainly more practical terms.

Curriculum bulletins, manuals, and courses of study have a place in the program. But all too frequently an importance has been attached to them which is far beyond their actual value. Even the oft-repeated assertion concerning the great value teachers get from helping to prepare a curriculum bulletin does not always stand up under close scrutiny. It can be a helpful experience when it evolves in orderly fashion from successful practices carried on in the classroom. But even then, whatever experience is gained in actual preparation of the bulletin does not alone justify its preparation. The successful practices upon which the bulletin are based should be carried on anyway and for more compelling reasons. Whatever experience is gained from recording successful practices in a bulletin can be gained in other ways with less time and effort. However, the time and effort required may still be justified if such publications, when prepared, can be put to good use.

They can, of course, be highly valuable when used properly. In this respect their value lies in the extent to which they can be used as sources of good practices which may be selected by teachers and modified or changed by them according to the varying needs of their pupils. Unless used in this way, their real value may be doubtful. If all teachers are required to follow a set course of study or a curriculum guide, the harm to the school system can be very great. Teacher growth will be stultified rather than fostered and a stagnant uniformity will blanket the school system. But when teachers are free to forge ahead, making use of the curriculum guide or course of study where needed, the school system is in position to make progress. However, even when used to best advantage, the gains realized can be exceeded by other means.

A glaring weakness of the curriculum guide, or course of study, is

that it never really reveals best curriculum practices. Within a year after it is published the best teachers will already have progressed beyond the most forward-looking practice it contains. And by the time the majority of teachers have progressed to the point where they can make effective use of it, the better teachers have forged so far ahead that it no longer is of much use to them. Thus, there is always a lag behind the "growing edge" of progress.

Many school systems with excellent programs of curriculum development do not publish formal curriculum guides or courses of study. With them, curriculum development and teacher growth are regarded as synonymous. Just as the level of performance of teachers at any given time varies, so does curriculum development vary for each teacher. Some teachers will be far out in front operating in the forefront of progress. New ideas are being tested; new practices are tried; explorations are made into new areas of need. Helping these teachers move forward continuously is one of the tasks. Another task is to do everything possible in spreading good ideas throughout the school system and to help teachers incorporate them in their teaching. This, like the first task, is a continuous process. For neither is there a single ready-made procedure.

Thus, an increasing number of school systems avoid placing too much reliance on any one procedure. They realize that curriculum development moves forward on many fronts and by various means. Preschool conferences, workshops, small group meetings, child study groups, intervisitation, classroom experimentation, community surveys, selection of new instructional materials—all these are parts of the program of curriculum development.

CURRICULUM MATERIALS CENTER

Nearly all schools are not sufficiently large to justify placing in them all the instructional materials required for providing the kind of learning experiences pupils need. The provision of these materials has over the years come to be regarded as one of the important functions of the county superintendent in facilitating curriculum development. Thus, in many county school systems there has been a concerted effort to establish an instructional materials center from which teachers

are encouraged to draw materials needed for making their instruction more effective.

Although in actual practice the quantity and variety of materials provided vary greatly, there is common agreement that the center should contain at least the following: a number of sets of supplementary reading textbooks in sufficient quantity to serve all elementary classrooms in the county; a stock of library books large enough to supplement adequately, by circulation, all the school libraries in the county; audio-visual aids, including films, filmstrips, slides, flat pictures, as well as equipment for projecting and showing such materials.

Undoubtedly, here is an area of service that may reasonably be expected to expand and improve in quality in the years ahead. Delivery service to local schools, particularly the use of bookmobiles, is already being provided in a sizable number of counties. Many counties in recent years have made marked progress in adding to both the quantity and variety of materials.

SELECTED REFERENCES

Caswell, Hollis L., and associates, *Curriculum Improvement in Public School Systems*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1950.

Contains excellent background material for assisting in evaluating programs of curriculum development. Descriptions are also given of current curriculum development programs of various types.

Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction, *Leadership at Work*, Fifteenth Yearbook, the Department, Washington, D.C., 1943.

Contains many excellent illustrations of the leadership techniques and procedures involved in improving the work of teachers.

Everett, Marcia (ed.), *The Rural Supervisor at Work*, Yearbook of the Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1949.

Presents a comprehensive picture of the rural supervisor's work today. Lengthy descriptions of supervisory programs in San Diego County (California), Breathitt County (Kentucky), and Warren County (New Jersey) furnish excellent background information on how instructional supervision functions in widely different situations.

Melchoir, William T., *Instructional Supervision*, D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, 1950.

A large number of illustrations of the various techniques and procedures in supervision of instruction are presented in case-study form. A number of these illustrations are drawn from county and rural school systems.

CHAPTER XIII

Relations with the Public

Among all the factors that influence public education, none is as important as the human element. Buildings, books, and buses; policies, practices, and procedures; money, materials, and methods—all the many instruments, mechanisms, and devices of school organization are but means to the end of happy, healthy, effective people. The school is a result of the action of people; it functions through the coöperative efforts of people; its raw products and its finished commodities are people; the school's business is people.

The school is a community of people—children, youth, and adults; pupils, parents, and teachers—acting together to achieve the common purposes of education. It is at its best when best use is made of the individual and combined energies of the people who comprise it. The psychological cord that holds them together and gives unity to their interests and efforts is school-public relations.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

School-public relations cannot rightly be conceived as a bridge, a two-way street, or a line of communication existing between the school on one side of a yawning chasm and the public on the other. No such line of demarcation can be drawn between the school and the public. The two are an integral unit bound together and sustained by a thousand ties that are strengthened or weakened each time an eager child

enrolls in the kindergarten grades or a bright-eyed youth receives a high school diploma. The monthly report card that brings to parents a brief description of their children's progress in school, the annual tax statement from the school treasurer's office, the school bus stopping along the roadside each morning to pick up little clusters of waiting children, the friendly policeman who helps children across a dangerous traffic intersection, the monthly meeting of the parent-teacher association, are but a few of the many threads that bring unity to the relationships between home, school, and community.

School-public relations exist in some form in every district that operates a school. These relations may be strong or weak, tense or easy, friendly or antagonistic, in varying degrees of intensity. These patterns of relationships are comparable in many respects to the relationships that exist between the different members of a family unit, a social club, or a business organization. Conception of a situation in which all these relations would be good or poor or established with any substantial degree of permanence is almost beyond the stretch of imagination. The relationship of people to each other, as they live and work together in a wholesome situation, reflects the uniqueness of each individual. People respond to different incidents, situations, and events in different ways. There may be almost as many different reactions to an overcrowded first-grade classroom, an increase in teachers' salaries, or renewal of the superintendent's contract as there are families in the community. It is the overtones of their reactions, which ebb and flow almost like the tides of the sea, that give character to the total pattern of school public relations.

IDENTITY OF SCHOOL WITH PUBLIC INTEREST AND ACTION

The school-public relations program, when viewed from the position of the county superintendent, is an aspect of school administration involving a conscious effort to maintain effective functional identity between the interests and actions of the public and the policies and procedures of the school. It begins with the school, not as a line responsibility but as a service function of administration that involves every member of the staff. Its purpose is not to sell a bill of goods, to

glamourize, to whitewash, or to cover up mistakes and shortcomings. It is not a potent drug prescribed for an acute illness nor a heady stimulant administered to sustain the school system through a crisis. Its purpose, stated in simple terms, is to help people work together well. It is a carefully planned, long-range program of community education in its broadest sense.

INFORMATION

To reap full advantage of the power that lies in the school, community people—parents, pupils, teachers, administrators, and the general public—must know the purposes of the school together with its needs, its problems, and its methods of operation. They must be fully aware of its accomplishments and its failures, its strength and its limitations. Shortcomings in a program of community education cannot be overcome by glossing them over or hiding them under the table. Neither can the program move forward with full community strength under a cloud of pessimism created by overemphasizing limitations and failures. Success creates a feeling of confidence and stirs the hearts of timid, doubtful, and faltering people. Everybody needs to have the facts as they are, promptly and clearly stated. *What, why, when, where, who, and how* are fundamentals of a good school-public relations program.

SHARING

But to have the facts without a chance to act may lead to frustration and discontent and be less satisfactory than not knowing at all. Informing the people is only part of a school-public relations program. It is equally important that provisions be made for people to share in planning, in making decisions, and in carrying on the program. Time and again in educational literature and public utterances, it has been pointed out that the school, more nearly than any other institution of community life, belongs to and is operated by the people. Anything that contributes to the perpetuation of this democratic principle of administration strengthens the position of the school and is sound school-public relations. If the school is, in the truest sense, an institu-

tion "of the people and by the people," then the people should share in its basic decisions.¹

STAFF RESPONSIBILITY

No program of school-public relations can be much better than the working relationships between members of the school staff. It is another example of charity beginning at home. Children and parents are keenly sensitive to internal staff strife and dissension. Petty jealousies and narrow, selfish ambitions that cause friction among school staff members soon become common community knowledge that lowers the prestige of the school and decreases confidence in personnel. A school that would have a good public relations program must begin by getting its own house in order.

Every employee of the school system is a public relations agent creating favorable opinion or ill will for the school. Loyalties, respect, and pride; petty grievances, complaints, and attitudes of discontent are consciously and subconsciously transmitted through mannerisms, casual conversation, and the performance of regular functions. The cheerful greeting from the girl at the telephone in the superintendent's office, the friendly attitude of the janitor, and the considerate action of the bus driver for the comfort and safety of his pupil passengers place the school in a favorable position in the observing eyes of the public.

A UNIQUE CENTER OF SCHOOL-PUBLIC RELATIONS

The county superintendent's office, particularly in a rural county intermediate district, is a unique center of school-public relations. It lacks the close daily contacts with the homes that exist in the community school. The farm shop, school band, glee club and operetta, activities in the kindergarten classroom, the first-grade reading program, and the nature-study field trip, all powerful channels of communication between home life and the school in the local district, are only indirectly related to the county superintendent's office. To this close community of relationships, he is scarcely more than an interested

¹ American Association of School Administrators, *Public Relations for America's Schools*, Twenty-Eighth Yearbook, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1950, p. 13.

observer. His leadership may be reflected in almost every activity of the school, but he is like the anonymous benefactor who by himself derives satisfaction from the giving.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

Many of the most critical points in the county superintendent's school-public relations are in situations only indirectly related to the day-to-day activities of the school. Serving as an educational consultant to the juvenile court, the department of public health, and the county welfare association is a part of his regular schedule of work. He is the spokesman and representative of education when long-range plans are being made by agricultural extension workers, county and township road supervisors, and soil conservation officials. He serves as an active member of the county agricultural board, the county fair association, and community planning boards. He assists in organizing the tuberculosis seal campaign, a school bond savings drive, and a county health clinic. He speaks in the interest of education at meetings of the Rotary Club, the Farm Bureau, and local labor organizations. These are focal points of rural community action.² Values are weighed, decisions are made, and concepts are formed that serve as guide lines to the whole course of community life. It is of utmost importance that the issues of community education be presented clearly and effectively.

In these processes of overall community action, the school appears for consideration on a basis comparable to such other problems of county and community planning as public health, safety, law enforcement, employment, marketing, and conservation. In this area of community action, with organizations and strong individual leaders as participants, the needs and interests of the schools are not infrequently pitted against problems of assessment and taxation, local school district reorganization, and maintenance of the overall pattern of neighborhood and community life. It is by no means an unusual occurrence to hear groups of people from small neighborhoods that are gradually disintegrating vigorously insist that the local school be continued in operation because of its value as a community center.

² Shirley Cooper (ed.), *The County Superintendent of Schools in the United States*, Yearbook of the Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1950, p. 13.

MANY CENTERS OF COMMUNITY ACTION

The county superintendent's work brings him into contact with many groups of people. In a typical county there may be a half-dozen or more communities, each with its pride, loyalties, traditions, and prejudices, and three or four times as many well-recognized neighborhoods. No two of them are alike. They are as different as the personalities of individuals and frequently act with greater compelling influence. Within each neighborhood and community there is a diversity of groups formulated on the basis of common interests and physical characteristics—women's clubs, youth groups, businessmen's associations, labor organizations, church groups, and local units of organized political parties. Each is an important part of the general public with whom the county superintendent is responsible for maintaining good working relations and sustaining confidence in the public schools. So great and so diversified is the task that one cannot but wonder when the county superintendent has time to devote to boards of education and to the interests and needs of pupils if he meets the responsibilities that are placed on him for maintaining good school-public relations.

The county superintendent's program of school-public relations is literally spread over the map of the county. Directly and indirectly it involves every neighborhood and community and reaches every individual. It is comprised of an intermingling of issues and numerous functional details that range all the way from the broad purposes of public education to the use of the school building for a political party meeting.

THE PUBLIC

In large centers of population, where life is intricate and complex, or in situations and activities involving large numbers of people, the interests and reactions of people are extended beyond the concrete reality of men and women into an overwhelming, all-powerful intangible that is known as the public. Public mind, public will, public consciousness, public opinion, public reaction become a ghostly social-psychic power that haunts people whose lives and fortunes are dependent upon the actions of large groups of people. It is the audience

of the radio news commentator, the constituency of the politician, the traffic of the transportation system, the fans of the baseball club, and the trade of the business establishment. This public transcends the identity of men and women and the earthiness of personal issues. It is analyzed by scientific statistical methods and catered to by taste and fashion. The most skillful artists, columnists, and public speakers are called upon to soothe its temper and sway its action. This abstract public is a force powerful enough to command the respect and attention of men in every walk of life.

PROBLEMS AND PERSONALITIES

The public with which the rural county superintendent works is not in any sense of the word an abstraction. Personalities bump against each other and sometimes jostle the superintendent in community consideration of such problems as local school district reorganization, selection of a site for a new school plant, or change in the school tax levy rate. Public action on educational issues is seasoned with the cold facts of community living. Fluctuations in the price of milk, the yield of wheat, or employment in the mines may be reflected in the appropriations voted at the annual school meeting for teachers' salaries and school plant maintenance.

SCHOOL-PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

School-public relations are everybody's business because everybody is concerned and is in some respect a participant. But this does not mean that a sound program of school-public relations can be developed in an incidental haphazard manner or sustained by the efforts of busy individuals in spare moments after everything else has been done. To the contrary, it must be a carefully planned, continuous program that is allocated a fair share of physical and human resources in the overall educational plan.

DAYTON PLAN

School people in both rural and urban communities have drawn heavily from the public relations experiences of business and industry. The program of industry-community relations which was begun in

Dayton, Ohio, in the early 1930's and is commonly known as the Dayton Plan has provided schoolmen with many valuable suggestions for developing school-public relations programs.

The objectives of this plan, which was adopted by a number of industrial institutions in Dayton and has since been widely used in industry, were "(1) to find out what the public was thinking and saying about industry; (2) to separate the true from the false in uncomplimentary statements; (3) when statements concerned truth about conditions that should be changed, to establish different company policies or modify existing policies to eliminate the objections; and (4) to convey to the public, in every possible way, factual and complete information to replace the wrong and incomplete impressions that were unfavorably influencing public opinion."³

ADAPTATION TO SCHOOL SITUATION

In adaptations of the Dayton Plan to programs of school-community relations, schoolmen have made use of the following general procedures:

1. A factual survey or an opinion study is made to determine what people are thinking about the schools and to assemble information pertinent to dominant educational issues in the area. The public opinion study made in the Denver, Colorado, school system in 1950 illustrates the use of a public opinion survey. In this instance, the board of education employed an independent research agency that specialized in public opinion surveys to make the study. Techniques involved included securing reactions from a representative sampling of people as to what they liked and disliked about the schools, opinions on school discipline, whether teachers were giving too little or too much individual attention to pupils, and the emphasis given by the schools to different subject matter fields. Altogether, reactions were secured to sixteen different questions pertinent to the organization and operation of the schools.⁴
2. Results of the survey or opinion study are reported to the community. Effort is made to secure widespread dissemination of the findings. Fac-

³ Adapted from James W. Irwin, "Winning Better Relations with the Community," *Your Public Relations* (Glenn and Denny Griswold, eds.), Magazines of Industry, Inc., New York, 1948, p. 173.

⁴ Research Service, Inc., *Denver Looks at Its Schools*, Board of Education, Denver Public Schools, Denver, 1950, pp. 3-31.

tual information is frequently reported in graphic form and conclusions and recommendations are briefly, concisely, and simply written so that they can be quickly and easily read. Frequently, two reports are written—a brief illustrated summary in pamphlet form designed to catch and hold the attention of busy people, and a longer detailed report for the use of persons in key positions and for persons whose time is not so seriously limited by other activities. The press and radio are invaluable allies of schoolmen in reporting the findings of such studies to the community.

3. In an effort to secure assimilation and careful consideration of the findings and recommendations of the survey, a program of community discussion is initiated. In some instances, this discussion takes the form of hearings on definite proposals and recommendations, held in neighborhood centers, with factual information gleaned from the survey serving as a background for the discussion. More often it comes up for consideration in meetings of such organizations as the Grange, Farm Bureau, Farm Women's Club, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, and Parent-Teacher Association.
4. When it is believed information is disseminated widely enough to permit the people in the community to act on an informed and intelligent basis, the issue or recommendation for change is brought before the people for formal action, which is usually expressed by means of a popular vote.

Public relations in a school system differ markedly in one respect from the public relations program of an industry or business organization. The industry itself makes adaptations in its policy, organization, and operation. Major changes can be made without going farther than the board of directors. In the school system, it is the community itself which makes major changes in the school. Public opinion must be translated into public action. Since uninformed public action expressed on the basis of hurried emotional reaction might have negative effects on the school, it is most important that those with major leadership responsibilities in the school system keep the public well informed at all times.

PRACTICE IN A RURAL COUNTY

In rural districts where funds available for employing research specialists and special survey committees are limited, lay citizens frequently join with teachers and administrators in a community self-

study of the educational program. This procedure has the advantage of citizen participation from the outset. Lack of specialized research skill is compensated for to some extent by the freshness, directness, and realism of the information that is assembled. Adams, Harris, and Hopper have reported such a study in Casey County, Kentucky.

In this county school district, consultative services from the University of Kentucky and the state department of education assisted local leaders in organizing the study and analyzing data and preparing a report, but most of the actual field work was done by teachers, administrators, and lay citizens in the district.

A steering committee comprised of teachers, board members, and lay citizens was organized as one of the initial steps in the planning stages of the study. The steering committee outlined the broad aspects of the study and created work committees which included about one hundred people. The work committees in turn secured the assistance of other citizens until people from every area of life in the school district were working together in a study of the school system. Farmers, storekeepers, businessmen, housewives, county officials, ministers, children, and newspapermen joined with teachers, administrators, and school board members in a study of the school system. Altogether, more than 300 people in the school district participated in the study.

Members of the survey committees visited every school, rode every school bus route, checked conditions and facilities in every school plant, and observed teaching in every classroom. They looked into every phase of the county educational program. They discovered commendable features in the educational program and they found conditions that were undesirable. Where weaknesses were noted they sought to identify causes and possible means of correction.

When a curriculum work committee, through personal visitation and firsthand observations, found that no provisions were made in their high school for a school newspaper, a school band or orchestra, formal instruction in art and handicraft, and physical education, it was convincing evidence that the secondary school program needed improvement. When lay citizens discovered for themselves that the expenditures made for each pupil in average daily attendance in the school district was less than one-third of the national average, that taxable

property was assessed at less than one-third of its sale value, that the maintenance cost of school plants was high and buildings still in poor condition, and that the highest-paid teacher in the school system received an annual salary of only \$1640, farmers and businessmen did not label the findings as propaganda trumped up by the teaching profession to promote its own selfish interests. The factual information was not only placed on a firmer basis for consideration by the public in the school district but there were hundreds of substantial lay citizens who had seen for themselves and were ready to stand behind the facts.⁵

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Apathy is one of the highest hurdles to take in the course of school-public relations. Someone has pointed out that about 20 percent of the people in a school district are usually vigorous, active supporters of the schools, 5 percent are against the schools, and 75 percent are so indifferent that they do not bother to express themselves one way or the other except when unusual or sensational situations arise.

NATIONAL CITIZENS COMMISSION

The National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, organized in 1949 under the leadership of Roy Larsen, is making important strides toward breaking down indifference and arousing active citizens' interest in the public schools.

The idea of a national commission of lay citizens for the public schools originated with a joint committee appointed by the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association and the Problems and Policies Committee of the American Council on Education. This joint committee, headed by President Conant of Harvard University, met with a small group of nationally recognized lay leaders and suggested the formation of such a committee to develop a positive approach to the consideration of a growing undercurrent of questions

⁵ Harold P. Adams, Fred E. Harris, and Robert L. Hopper, *Looking Ahead for Casey County Schools*, Bulletin of the Bureau of School Services, University of Kentucky, Lexington, December, 1951, pp. 3-48.

concerning the goals and purposes of the American public school system.⁶

Challenged by educators, this group of laymen met in exploratory meetings over a period of two years, considering organization, operation, and functions of a national lay citizens' committee. As a result of these deliberations, the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools was formed. The membership of the Commission includes representatives of business, industry, labor, agriculture, law, medicine, and the press. It does not include any professional schoolmen because it was believed that its usefulness would be increased by making it strictly a laymen's organization. Financial backing for the organization comes from the General Education Board, the Carnegie Foundation, and the New York Community Trust.

The objectives of the Commission are (1) to help people realize the importance of public schools to democracy, and (2) to arouse in each community a will to improve the schools. It makes no attempt to solve problems and to settle educational issues for any community. Its purpose is to encourage citizens at local, county, and state levels to work toward school improvement in their own ways.

The National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools has stimulated the organization of citizens' committees and lay advisory councils in local districts in every part of the country. A report in 1952 indicated that more than 1500 local lay groups of this type were actively engaged in local school studies and serving in an advisory capacity to boards of education and superintendents. In a discussion of the function of citizens committees, Toy has aptly pointed out ". . . that one of the greatest stumbling blocks to school improvement is the fact that people have to deal with people before their schools get any better."⁷ Unfortunately, because of misinformation and lack of information, barriers are created between groups of lay citizens in the community and between lay citizens and the professional school staff. Until such barriers are broken down, effective community action cannot

⁶ Roy E. Larsen, "The Organization and Work of the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools," *The School Executive*, January, 1952, pp. 46-48.

⁷ Henry Toy, Jr., "A Report to the People from the Director of NCCPS," *The School Executive*, January, 1952, p. 42.

be taken and educational progress cannot be made. Preventing the erection of such barriers and breaking them down where they exist is a major function of local school citizens' committees and an important aspect of good school-public relations.

A study of the activities of lay citizens' committees in ninety-seven New Jersey school districts lists such tangible benefits of lay participation as help in planning building programs, successful endorsement of bond issues, establishment of adult education programs, increased publication of school news, introduction of new vocational courses in high schools, making provisions for additional items in the school budget, providing better playground equipment, developing guidance programs, and securing needed legislation on local school problems.⁸

Citizens' advisory committees acting in the capacity of a supplementary agency to the school board have again and again proven to be helpful in translating community educational interests and desires into a functioning educational program.

AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

American Education Week was established in 1921 by the Representative Assembly of the National Education Association as a result of recommendations made by a special committee on Americanism and education appointed to cooperate with the American Legion. Motivated by the disclosure that 25 percent of the men examined for military service in the First World War were found to be illiterate and 29 percent were rejected because of physical unfitness, the founders sought to establish a widespread movement to improve public education. They recommended that "an education week be observed in all communities annually for the purpose of informing the public of the accomplishments and needs of the public schools and to secure their cooperation in meeting these needs."⁹

American Education Week is jointly sponsored by the American Legion, National Education Association, National Congress of Parents

⁸ Eleanor Cole, "Results Citizens Committees Have Secured," *The School Executive*, January, 1952, p. 61.

⁹ National Education Association, *Manual for American Education Week*, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1951, p. 4.

and Teachers, and the United States Office of Education. These official sponsors set the stage for each annual observance. Together, they select the dates and themes, prepare special planning helps, promote observance through their own channels, and give the week wide publicity.

But it is in the thousands of local neighborhoods, communities, and school districts throughout the country that the observance of American Education Week becomes alive and takes on vital school-public relations significance. Its observance is characterized by two broad action programs—*school visitation and educational interpretation*. Projects, activities, and experiences planned locally bring the schools to the people and the people to the schools. As many as 10 million people visit the schools in their home communities during a single annual observance, and many more are reached through radio, newspapers, movie trailers, magazines, posters, sermons, leaflets, exhibits, parades, and personal messages sent to homes.

The county superintendent is the "spark plug" in the development of American Education Week programs in rural areas. He maintains contact with the national sponsors and secures materials and supplies for distribution to the local school units; he coöperates with the local organizations of the American Legion, state education association, and parent-teacher association in initiating local planning and securing publicity; he enlists the assistance of farm organizations, women's clubs, youth groups, county and township officials, and church groups; he prepares materials that can be used as a basis for newspaper stories and arranges for radio programs; he establishes a reporting committee which appraises the results of the week's activities.

In the local school neighborhood or community, a committee usually comprised of teachers and lay citizens plans the activities, which may include appropriate recognition of education in the Sunday church services; open house at the school, sometimes held in the evening to give parents a better opportunity to attend; demonstration teaching; an exhibit displaying work of pupils and teachers; and an open forum discussion of an important community educational issue. American Education Week, as it has been observed over a period of three decades, has become an important feature of school-public relations programs

in cities, towns, villages, hamlets, and open-country neighborhoods throughout the nation.

PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

In the first lines of his book, *Practical Applications of Democracy*, George B. deHuzar wrote, "Democracy is something you do; not something you talk about."¹⁰ If one could paraphrase this crisp, pithy statement and say, "School-public relations is something people do; not something they talk about," it would rather aptly describe the public relations aspect of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. This organization is not only an agency or an implement of school-public relations but it is in itself a program of school-public relations in operation. Its organization, its membership, and its purposes exemplify the basic concept of school-public relations. It is a common meeting ground where teachers, parents, and other lay citizens come together to do something about things that need to be done.

The National Congress of Parents and Teachers, established in 1897, now has an active membership of more than 6.5 million people who work through fifty state branches—all of the forty-eight states, Hawaii, and the District of Columbia—and 33,000 local units. Time and again it has demonstrated its effectiveness in the support of legislation and educational policy at state and national levels, but its great strength and usefulness is in the local neighborhoods and communities where each year it leaves its imprint on the program of literally thousands of schools by bringing the home and the school into closer working relationships.

Summer roundups, bookmobiles, school plant beautification, school lunch programs, kindergarten and nursery school classes, child study groups, playground equipment, summer recreation programs, milk fund projects, dental clinics, recreation programs for youth and adults, hobby shows, and immunization programs—to mention a few of the many activities and accomplishments of local parent-teacher associations forcefully calls to attention the pattern of home-community-school coöperation that characterizes this nationwide movement. In

¹⁰ George B. deHuzar, *Practical Applications of Democracy*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1945, p. xiii.

large and small communities alike, the fused efforts of parents and teachers have brought forth accomplishments that could not be reached through the efforts of either working independently of the other.

The county superintendent of schools has no stronger ally in his program of school-public relations than the parent-teacher association. It is not motivated by any commercial, sectarian, or partisan objectives. Its underlying, unifying, all-prevailing purpose is the educational welfare of the growing child. It works toward this end by trying to bring about between "educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education."¹¹

It is a stated policy of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers that local units shall not seek to direct the administrative activities of the school or to control its policies. There are but comparatively few instances where local associations have overstepped the limits established by this policy. Where such unfortunate circumstances have developed, they have been due in no small part to the superintendent's failure to contribute constructive leadership to the organization.

Parents alone cannot make the work of the local association effective. Its organization, its purposes, and its program demand teamwork by the school and the home. The superintendent should be one of the most important members of the parent-teacher association team.

BUSINESS-INDUSTRY-EDUCATION DAY

In 1947, twenty-two school administrators enrolled as graduate students in the summer school session of Michigan State College left the classrooms and college campus to make a field study of some of the largest business, industrial, and research centers in the United States. To save time and to permit a wider field of study in the limited time available, the group traveled in an airplane, which became known as the "flying classroom."¹² The insights these administrators gained into the problems of production, distribution, management, labor relations, and research were so valuable to both industry and education that a

¹¹ National Congress of Parents and Teachers, *The Parent Teacher Organization*, the Congress, Chicago, 1944, p. 184.

¹² Carl Horn, "On Wings of Learning," *Michigan Education Journal*, September, 1947, pp. 5-7.

series of regional conferences of business leaders and educational leaders was held to determine how these advantages might be extended to classroom teachers. Out of these conferences came the suggestion for a Business-Industry-Education Day. The idea claimed recognition quickly and won the support of both schoolmen and business and industrial leaders as a school-public relations device.

In many communities a business-industry-education day has become an annual event. Schools are closed and an entire day is devoted to a study of business and industrial firms in the area. Teachers and administrators organized in small study groups follow a carefully planned work schedule. They spend the morning seeing the establishments in action. The afternoon is spent in conferences with executives of business and industry. Frequently, the day ends with a dinner meeting attended by educators and business and industrial leaders.

The following steps are usually followed in organizing a business-industry-education day:

1. A small steering committee consisting of not more than nine members is organized. The superintendent initiates the formation of this committee by calling a meeting of business, industrial, labor, and educational leaders. The steering committee is established by the meeting. The necessary subcommittees are appointed by the steering committee.
2. The steering committee develops a tentative plan for the business-industry-education-day program which is submitted for approval to the board of education and to the chamber of commerce or other representative organization of business and industry in the community. After the tentative plan is approved, the committee informs each business and industrial firm in the community of the plan by formal letter and invites each to be represented at an orientation meeting.
3. At the orientation meeting working plans for the business-industry-education day are developed. The date is set and definite decisions are made on the arrangements for transportation, luncheons, speakers, size of study groups, and how costs will be met.
4. Preparation of the public and the participants on the how and why of the day is a most important step in planning. The purposes and preparation for the day are reported to the public by press and radio. A representative committee of school people is appointed by the superintendent.

ent to organize the teachers into work groups and to orient them on the purposes and possible values of the day.

Representatives of each host firm meet about one month before the date set for the business-industry-education day to go over their part in the general plan. Sometimes a check list is used in this meeting to avoid overlooking important details and to ensure consistency in the plan.

5. Finally, a briefing session is held a short time before the day to confirm all plans and work out last-minute details. When the plan is complete:
 - a. Each teacher is scheduled for one specific host firm.
 - b. Each firm has a list of its guest teachers.
 - c. Each firm has arranged transportation and lunch or dinner for its guests.
 - d. Each firm has a mimeographed outline of activities.
 - e. Time has been allocated for discussion of policy, theory, and practice of production and distribution.
 - f. Guides and conference leaders have prepared to answer questions anticipated from teachers.
 - g. Plans have been made for follow-up evaluation by both school people and businessmen.¹³

EDUCATION-BUSINESS-INDUSTRY DAY

The counterpart of a business-industry-education day is an education-business-industry day in which special plans are made for business and industrial leaders to visit the schools and to become better acquainted with the community's educational program.

Major responsibility for an education-business-industry day falls on school leaders. Planning begins with the principals and faculty members of the host schools. Consideration is given to the number of visitors each school can profitably accommodate, visitation schedules, luncheon arrangements, provisions for group discussions, and a suitable date.

Following these tentative plans, a committee of school people is appointed to enlist the coöperation of business and industrial firms in the community and to work out specific details of the program for the day. The experiences of these committees have not been extensive

¹³ Committee on Education, *How to Plan a Business Education Day*, Chamber of Commerce of the United States, Washington, D.C., 1950, pp. 4-5.

enough to establish principles, but they have pointed out the following guides to action:

1. Begin with clarifying purposes and plans in faculty meetings.
2. Allow plenty of time for detailed planning.
3. Explain the day to parents and children.
4. Arrange a workable schedule and stick to it.
5. Give visitors an opportunity to ask questions.
6. Let visitors observe normal procedures.
7. Use charts to present factual information about the schools.
8. Provide visitors, guides, and teachers with identification badges.
9. Anticipate questions and know the answers.
10. Brief the visitors on the day's program in an opening assembly.¹⁴

COUNCIL ON RURAL EDUCATION

Professor Butterworth and his associates have reported an aspect of school-public relations related to the enactment of legislation for reorganizing the intermediate district in New York State that is particularly applicable to rural areas. Educational leaders in the state had recognized for many years the inadequacies of the intermediate district and had repeatedly made recommendations and adopted resolutions in formal meetings urging its improvement. But no effective action had been taken. The intermediate district had been with the people a long time. They were accustomed to it and hesitated to support any movement for change in its organization and functions until the recommendations were supported by factual information.

School leaders in the state were in complete agreement on two important points. First, that an extensive study of the functions and organization of the intermediate district, together with the educational needs and opportunities in rural areas, should be made; and second, that the rural people in the state who comprised the segment of the total state population most directly concerned with the intermediate district should share in planning and making the study.

To secure lay participation in the study, a joint committee representing the district superintendents and the rural school principals, the

¹⁴ Committee on Education, *The Return Visit*, United States Chamber of Commerce, Washington, D.C., 1951.

two professional groups most directly concerned with any changes that might be made in the intermediate district, approached the Farm Conference Board, which is made up of representatives of eight major farm and home organizations, and asked for its assistance. The Farm Conference Board agreed to coöperate with the professional groups. As a result of this coöperation, the Council on Rural Education was formed.

The Council on Rural Education, as it was formed then and continued to function, was made up of two representatives from each of eight farm and home organizations, including the New York State Grange, the Cooperative G.L.F. Exchange, the New York State Horticultural Society, the Dairymen's League Cooperative Association, the New York State Federation of Home Bureaus, the New York State Vegetable Growers Association, and the New York State Farm Bureau Federation. It also included representatives from the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, the New York State School Boards Association, and six educational organizations—the State Department of Education, the Rural Education Department at Cornell University, the New York Association of District Superintendents, the New York State Secondary Principals Association, the New York State Council of City and Village Superintendents, and the Association of Elementary School Principals.¹⁵ Altogether, there were thirty-two members of the Council, representing sixteen different statewide organizations that had major interests in rural life and education.

The Council on Rural Education became the sponsor of the study. The first year it requested and secured funds necessary to make a pilot study from the State Department of Education. In the second and third years, when the study had extended into several areas of the state, the Council requested and secured without difficulty special appropriations from the state legislature. The study was organized and directed by the State Department of Education but the research staff reported directly to the Council on Rural Education. In some respects, the Council acted in the capacity of a local board of education—securing

¹⁵ Reported by J. E. Butterworth, *Your School District*, edited by Howard A. Dawson, the Report of the National Commission on School District Reorganization, Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1948, p. 207.

resources, forming policy, and appraising results. From beginning to end, it was the Council's study.

As the study neared completion, an extensive program for disseminating information was organized. Each of the coöperating organizations became an agency for acquainting the people of the state with the findings and recommendations of the research staff. Sixteen organizations, through their publications, public addresses by their leaders, state conventions, and numerous meetings of the local units of the organization, effectively carried the information into every nook and corner of the state.

A year was devoted to the educational phase of the study before any attempt was made to secure the needed and recommended legislation. But by this time the people were informed. They knew what they wanted. Recommendations made to the legislature, without dissension and a multitude of reservations, commanded attention and respect. Favorable action was secured without much difficulty. Together, rural laymen and professional school people had worked out a solution to a difficult problem and made another important step toward providing good educational opportunities for rural children. It was an example of school-public relations in action.

COÖPERATIVE PLANNING IN A RURAL COUNTY DISTRICT

The board of education of Millard County, Utah, arranged, just before the opening of school in 1946, for a countywide conference of parents and teachers to plan the educational program for the year. This was a new venture in educational planning in this county-unit school district, which is comprised of an area of more than 6000 square miles, but coöperative approval was readily given by such local organizations and institutions as the church, farm bureau, parent-teacher association, department of public health, soil conservation district, and local governmental agencies.

The state department of education and colleges and universities coöperated by providing consultants, speakers, and group discussion leaders. Local and state newspapers gave the conference extensive publicity and announcements were made in church and other public meetings.

On the first morning of the conference the school buses made the regularly scheduled runs through every hamlet and neighborhood in the county, but instead of picking up young children and teen-agers it picked up adults. It was dad's and mom's turn to go to school.

Every day for a week more than 300 parents and teachers met to study community problems and to plan community education. They lost but little time. Each day's work followed a carefully planned schedule arranged very much like the schedule the children would follow the next week and the remainder of the school year. At the short lunch period the parents ate the kind of lunches in the school cafeteria that would be served to the children and hurried back to their afternoon work groups that did not end until four o'clock.¹⁰

At the close of the conference the discussions were sifted and recommendations were made to the school board, to the administrators and teachers, and to other community organizations and institutions that had educational responsibilities. The recommendations included improved library services, a music library with albums of good music recordings available for family use, playgrounds, a swimming pool that would accommodate all people in the community, and an adult education program that would offer farmers and local business people practical assistance with control of noxious weeds and insects, local advertising, marketing, purchasing, poultry farming, and dairy herd improvement.

It was recommended that a nursery school be established in each community of the county school district and that teachers be employed during the summer months to keep libraries open, to provide instruction in vocal and instrumental music, and to supervise recreational activities. But not all responsibilities were placed on the school board. A county library committee would be organized to assist in procuring and circulating books; a little-theater group would be formed to present plays and puppet shows; and the churches would be asked to assume leadership in an annual music production that would reach every neighborhood and community in the county school district.

Two years later, schools in this rural county were closed again and

¹⁰ Shirley Cooper, "Parents and Teachers Plan Together," *NEA Journal*, April, 1947, pp. 292-293.

parents and teachers met once more to take stock of past accomplishments and to do further planning. By nine o'clock the auditorium in the high school was well filled with serious-minded men and women. After the usual preliminaries, which at times seem to be unnecessary but are an unavoidable part of every public meeting, had been performed, a young man from the audience arose to make a report of community educational accomplishments and undertakings attempted but not completed during the past two years. His figures of speech, the ideas he expressed, and an earthy quality in his mannerisms clearly identified him as a member of the farm group, but his insights into the purposes and processes of community education and his understanding of how people learn as they work together showed that he was a teacher as well as a farmer.

As the report progressed one caught glimpses of a community educational program in which a lot of people who are not usually regarded as teachers were actively at work on community educational problems, each doing what he could best do:

Forty teachers on a single day on the mountain watersheds, along open ditches, and in cultivated fields studying irrigation with farmers in the school district as their instructors.

County road employees working with the principal and larger boys of an elementary school at grading and surfacing a playground.

A group of young women in the homemaking laboratory of the high school in the evening making new Easter bonnets under the direction of the homemaking teacher.

Parents, pupils, and teachers participating together in a historical pageant.

Citizens' committees making a survey of the reading habits of the adult population.

A high school principal teaching boys and girls how to use the brightly colored stones in the fields near the school in making attractive bracelets, rings, and necklaces.

Two public health nurses at work in the schools and in the homes of the community.¹⁷

¹⁷ Shirley Cooper, "More Than Day-Dreaming," *NEA Journal*, February, 1949, pp. 117-118.

Throughout this extensive report of educational accomplishments, there were indications that people got things done by working together. The schools seemed to involve everybody in one way or another, made use of many resources that frequently are unnoticed, and combined learning with doing. School-public relations in this county was a process of understanding, sharing, and doing that involved teachers and parents in a common effort.

PARTICIPATION IN A METROPOLITAN COUNTY DISTRICT

Citizen participation in public school education in Arlington County, Virginia, claimed nationwide recognition in a recent March of Time film, *The Fight for Better Schools*. In this suburban county school district, which is a part of the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, more than 400 men and women serve as active members of citizens' advisory councils. To illustrate, a school construction advisory council, consisting of twenty men who are building contractors, architects, engineers, real estate dealers, and retailers of building materials, advise the superintendent and school board on the procurement of school sites and the construction of school plants.

A personnel policies advisory committee, including specialists in personnel administration, labor relations, and education who are citizens of Arlington County, has assisted in developing policies for personnel administration. Special advisory committees in the areas of art education, audio-visual aids, guidance, homemaking, libraries, music, education for atypical children, dramatics, and pupil transportation have advised the board and the professional staff in curriculum and school plant planning.

In a single year more than 14,000 men and women were paid members of the parent-teacher associations in the school district. They have given valuable assistance in organizing and conducting health examinations of children, circulating library books, interpreting a speech correction program, and improving the system of reporting pupil progress. A representative from each parent-teacher association in the school district serves on the parents' council on instruction.

The county school board nominating committee is, perhaps, the most striking demonstration of citizen interest and participation in the public

schools. Until recent years, the school board in Arlington County, as in most other local administrative units in Virginia, was appointed. Since a special law was enacted providing for election of school board members by popular vote, each year a group of citizens has met prior to the election date to select candidates for the positions to be filled. In the 1951 conference 590 delegates from ninety-seven different organizations in the county met for two evenings to select candidates for the two positions on the board that were to be filled. It scarcely needs to be pointed out that such an expression of interest on the part of citizens of the school district has contributed immeasurably to the prestige of board membership and has been effective in securing board members of the highest quality.

But citizens of Arlington County do more than assist and advise the school board with the organization, administration, and operation of the schools. They share in the use of school plants and in the educational program. The annual report of the superintendent shows that school buildings were used by community groups an average of sixty-five times each month during the 1951 school year. Classes in oil painting, ceramics, tailoring, furniture refinishing, and Biblical literature illustrate the use that was made of the school buildings for adult education purposes. Teen-age dancing, square dancing for older folk, volleyball, badminton, and ping-pong are typical recreational activities that the multipurpose rooms in the school buildings accommodated. Twenty school playgrounds were in daily use throughout the summer months for recreational purposes.¹⁸

In a charter for citizen participation published by the school board, the administration expressed its belief that:

1. The educational program maintained by a community is the concern of all its citizens.
2. Channels must be established and kept clear so that the people may express their wishes and opinions to their representatives, the school board.
3. The school board and the school staff should make use of the expert knowledge existing in the community.

¹⁸ W. A. Early, *Arlington Schools*, Annual Report of the County Superintendent of Schools, Arlington, 1951, p. 45.

4. The participation of citizens in educational planning should be kept as direct and informal as possible.
5. The school board and school staff should give full value to the opinions of all citizens.
6. The extent and nature of the participation of each individual will be determined by his interest in the program and his competence to make a contribution.
7. The citizens participating in educational planning should recognize at all times that the school board is legally responsible for making final decisions.¹⁹

MEDIA OF SCHOOL-PUBLIC RELATIONS

Identifying, appraising, selecting, and arranging for the use of appropriate media for communicating ideas and transmitting relationships are no small part of the leadership responsibilities in a school-public relations program. Films, slides, charts, posters, exhibits, school fairs, newspapers, radio, and public addresses are but a few media of school-public relations commonly used by county superintendents and their associates. It is inappropriate to refer to children as implements of communication, but no matter how we choose to designate them they do provide an effective means of maintaining contact between the school and the homes in the community.

The media commonly employed in school-public relations programs are sensitive, delicate instruments that require skill and mature judgment for effective use. Each is capable of initiating a flow of destructive as well as constructive relationships. A speech that is poorly made had better not be made at all; an exhibit that is sloppily arranged, no matter how commendable its purposes may be, is not effective and may have serious negative influences; and a newspaper article published under the name of a teacher or superintendent that fails to state the essential information accurately and clearly engenders contempt and disrespect for the entire school system. Any implement of school-public relations that is used must be used well.

An incident at a recent meeting of rural people, at which a proposal for school district reorganization was being considered, illustrates the need for careful use of media of communication. In preparation for

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

this meeting, the county superintendent had prepared a large, neatly lettered, and pleasingly arranged chart showing costs of various school services under the existing and under the proposed plan of administrative organization. When it came his turn to address the audience he made an effective and a convincing presentation. In the brief hush that settled over the audience at the close of his discussion, a lady from the back of the room asked, "Who made the chart?"

With his face glowing with pride, the county superintendent replied, "One of the girls in our office made the chart. Hasn't she done a beautiful job of lettering?"

Then, the lady commented, "Doesn't she know how to spell *hygienist*?" Every eye in the audience was directed to this beautifully written word on the chart, which was incorrectly spelled. It is needless to point out that the cause of school district reorganization, the prestige of the school, and the status of the county superintendent were definitely on the descending slope of the cycle during the remainder of that important meeting.

In planning the school-public relations program, skillful leadership first carefully appraises the resources available in the school organization. Note is made of principals, teachers, and pupils who are convincing public speakers, who can write well, who can prepare exhibit materials, and who can handle audio-visual-aids equipment effectively. The capabilities of these people are the most valuable resources available for developing the school-public relations program. Media are selected which use their competencies to the best advantage.

Time available, the nature of the job to be done at the moment, and the receptivity of the community are other important factors to be considered in planning the school-public relations program. The right tool must be selected for each job. A grass-roots approach that would be effective in dealing with a problem of school district reorganization in a sparsely settled rural area might be wholly out of place in considering a fundamental problem of curriculum revision in a suburban area.

Each and every facility or medium of communication in the community is an important part of the resources that should be used in developing the school-public relations program. The press is an ever-

ready channel of communication between the citizens of the community and their school. Far too often, superintendents make the grave mistake of regarding the press merely as a convenient implement to be used when the occasion demands it. Where such attitudes prevail, the press has but little opportunity or inclination to make a positive contribution to the overall tenor of school-public relations.

Editors, business managers, reporters—all people identified with community newspapers—are an integral part of the public that plans, supports, and operates the schools. Newspaper people are partners with the board of education, teachers, superintendents, farmers, housewives, and businessmen in the business and processes of community education. Any accomplishments the community schools make can be attributed in part to the contributions of the press if it carries its fair share of responsibilities. And, in like manner, the press should be assessed with its share of responsibility for serious limitations in the educational program. It is an important part of the community force that determines what the schools are and do, and should be regarded as such in every phase of community planning.

The business of the press is to inform people promptly and accurately about community issues and events. In performing this function, it shapes public opinion, creates attitudes, and establishes values that serve as guides to public action. This function of the press and the special abilities of its employees is a reservoir of strength upon which the community school should draw for developing and sustaining a good educational program. Good school-press relations exist when the flow of these resources into the processes of community education is free and easy.

THE WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

The press with which the typical county superintendent is most closely associated is a county weekly newspaper. It is a powerful molder of public opinion. No other newspaper in America is so thoroughly read as the small-town weekly. Lacking the space and reporting service for the state and national news coverage of a city daily, it devotes its attention to local issues and events. Consequently, it has proportionately more space available for school news than most large city daily papers.

The editor of the weekly paper is a busy man. Frequently, he acts as reporter, editorial writer, and business manager in addition to serving in the capacity of an editor. He has but little time to devote to becoming acquainted with the organization and operation of the schools, covering school events, and gathering information for feature articles and editorials. The superintendent who recognizes these limitations and plans a program of school-press relations adapted to the editor's work schedule is off to a good start.

An occasional, brief, friendly visit to the editor's office helps maintain cordial relations and provides an opportunity for the editor to become informed about school events and community educational issues. Factual information made available in clear, concise form for ready reference frequently becomes a background for an editorial. Well-written articles featuring school events, various aspects of the instructional program, or an outstanding accomplishment by a pupil or teacher are welcomed and may be printed without revision. In many county school systems, a plan of organized news reporting is developed for each school in which news items are gathered from different classrooms or departments and reported to the press by a teacher or principal who has accepted this specific responsibility.

The press is but one of many implements of school-public relations. The well-planned program selects the media that promise to be most effective, but has diversity enough to permit the use of many different channels of communication. In every phase of operation:

1. Relationships between school personnel and institutions, agencies and individuals in community life, are strictly kept on a professional basis.
2. Every item of information to be released is carefully checked for accuracy and fairness.
3. Care is exercised to prevent unnecessarily offending individuals and groups.
4. Variety is provided both in the content and in the method of communication.
5. Communications are kept friendly and informal so they become a cementing influence rather than an entering wedge in school-community relations.
6. No matter what the issue is, the approach is always positive. When it

is necessary to take an opposing position, an alternative positive course of action is presented.

7. Issues and purposes are clearly stated. There is no place for "fuzziness" and "haziness" in a good program of school-public relations.

SCHOOL-PUBLIC RELATIONS PERSONNEL

The well-recognized need for bringing the school and the community into closer unity is leading to the practice of specifically assigning responsibility for school-public relations to one or more persons in the school system. In large school systems, full-time directors of school-public relations are employed. One of the important recommendations in the recent New York City School Survey made under the direction of Dr. George D. Strayer was that an associate superintendent of schools be employed at a salary of \$16,500 to head a division of public information.²⁰ In smaller school systems, responsibilities are frequently assigned to a principal or teacher or are combined with the duties of a research director.

The organization and membership of the National School Public Relations Association is a good index of the increasing emphasis being given to school-public relations. This organization was founded in Denver, Colorado, in 1935 by a group of fifteen educators who wanted to bring about better community understanding of the objectives, accomplishments, and needs of the public schools. In 1950 it became a department of the National Education Association with an active membership of 1142. Two years later, in 1952, membership in the organization had increased to more than 3500.²¹

The National School Public Relations Association serves the purpose of pooling and sharing ideas and interest of school superintendents, elementary and secondary principals, members of public relations committees for state and local school systems and professional organizations, and other persons who have special interest or direct responsibility in school-public relations. Its significance to this particular discussion is to indicate the growing interest in this aspect of community

²⁰ Reported by the National School Public Relations Association, *Trends in School Public Relations*, the Association, Washington, D.C., February, 1952.

²¹ Roy K. Wilson, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1952 (unpublished material).

education and the general approach being made to the growing need for closer working relationships between school and community.

INDIVIDUALS COUNT

Good school-public relations are essentially, in theory and in practice, good human relations. It is recognizing people as they are and for what they can do and want to do, and giving them chances to function in a way that counts. The good school-public relations program is cognizant of the basic desires in all people, no matter where they are or what they do, to be somebody, to do something worth while, and to have a part in the affairs that shape the destiny of themselves and their fellow men. The great end of school-public relations is to help people develop their school, their community, and their country by developing themselves.

In the press of community life, with its ever growing complexity and increasing tempo, there is the ever-present danger that the needs, interests, and capabilities of individuals may be so completely submerged in trends and norms and averages that the fruits of their uniqueness never mature or are never garnered. They may be lost by replacing the warm contacts of personal association and face-to-face relations with the conveniences of mechanical social inventions. The annual school meeting that once took such a prominent part in community school planning is quietly but surely slipping into oblivion. The school board that reflects the interests of the people, speaks for the people, acts for the people, and attempts to express the will of the people turns to leaders of social organizations for expressions of community sentiment. The school superintendent who once boasted that he knew every parent and every pupil in the school district by name is being replaced in many instances by a superintendent who is personally acquainted with scarcely more than half his teachers.

This is not to deplore the change that is taking place. Consolidation of the functions of public school education is part and parcel of the whole change in social, industrial, and governmental life. Many advantages that could not otherwise have been provided have been secured by increase in the size of administrative units. But there are few

important changes in the modes and methods of living of mankind that are not accompanied with new provoking and perplexing problems. The societal forces which have led to increased complexity in public school education have been accompanied with the problem of maintaining an uninterrupted flow of personal interest, sympathy, understanding, and helpfulness between the home and school, of keeping the broad purposes of the school tuned to the needs of the hundreds of Susies and Tommies it serves, and of preventing their fathers and mothers from becoming anonymous parents. These are the problems and these are the purposes of school-public relations.

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Coördinating the Work of the School with Other Educational Agencies and Organizations

For six hours a day, five days a week, and nine months a year, most children in communities and neighborhoods throughout the land live in the school, work in the school, and play in the school. It is their shop, their laboratory, one of their principal sources of sustenance for spiritual, moral, social, and intellectual growth. Whether the fare is tasty and nourishing or bitter and bare, they drink from it deeply—in classrooms, on playgrounds, and in chattering little groups that form in doorways and corridors. What they see, what they do, what they learn, and what they think, individually and in groups, leave lasting imprints on their pliant characters and go far toward shaping their future lives. As best it can, the school stirs their ambitions, directs their energies, and cultivates their interests toward the ideals of good community living. This is the school's job—educating the community's children.

In meetings its responsibilities, the school has a number of clear-cut purposes that can be achieved to best advantage through coöperation with other members of the family of institutions and agencies that serves community life. All citizens want children to be healthy rather than undernourished and ridden with disease. There is general agreement that the natural resources of the community be intelligently used, that farms be productive and well managed, that houses and barns be well constructed and kept in good repair, that homes be centers of

good family living, and that children who have learned to read have ready access to books and papers so that reading can be continued with profit and with pleasure.

The purposes of public education are not achieved until the acquired knowledge and skills are put into practice. In the well-planned community educational program there is a gradual transition from classroom experiences to the problems and activities of community living. To illustrate, health, one of the prime objectives of public education, cannot be handled satisfactorily as abstract subject matter or successfully dealt with as an individual personal problem. Hookworms can be avoided only by maintaining good sanitary facilities. Typhoid is spread by impure water or contaminated food supplies. Malaria is flown from person to person on the wings of mosquitoes and can be controlled best by draining swamps and screening windows. Tuberculosis, measles, diphtheria, and many other infectious diseases are spread from person to person. The school is only one among many institutions and agencies that work together in making the community a healthful place and in keeping children well.

Many of the mysteries of nature and the methods of science about which children study in school are essential parts of the foundations of agriculture. Beginning on a simple basis of coöperation with county agents and soil conservation specialists, classroom learning is put into practice on the farms and in the homes of the children, with benefit to both the program of classroom instruction and to community agricultural enterprise. Thus, the community becomes a practice ground for the school and at the same time serves as an important source of content for the instructional program.¹

In the course of development of American community life, responsibility for educating children and youth has been formally assigned to the schools. But there are many other agencies and organizations which have important educational functions even though their major purposes are only indirectly related to the purposes of the school. During the past two decades the number of such agencies and organizations has

¹ Edwin R. Embree, "Education for Rural Life," *Farmers in a Changing World*, Yearbook of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1940, pp. 1033-1041.

rapidly increased and the range of their interests has broadened. Because of the prominent position the county occupies in the scheme of local government, the programs of these agencies tend to be organized on a county basis.

With a concept of community education that is based on practical problems of community living and that includes all age groups coming more prominently into the forefront of educational thought and practice, it becomes more and more important that schools work closely with these agencies. The county superintendent is in a particularly strategic position for assisting in the maintenance of good working relationships between the schools and these agencies and organizations. In almost every county this constitutes an important part of his work.

AGENCIES AND AGENCY RELATIONS

An agency is a public or private administrative unit that has an organized program which contributes to the common purposes of community living. For the most part, agencies are of relatively recent origin. They were originated during the decade prior to World War I, mushroomed into importance during the years of the depression, and seem to have become an integral part of both rural and urban community life during the period of World War II.

The term *agency* is frequently loosely used to refer to the commonly known administrative units and organizations through which community opinion is expressed and action on special community problems is taken. Perhaps no sharp distinction can be made between agencies and organizations because of the overlapping of functions in operational practice, but a general distinction is readily observed.

A community organization is an assimilative, absorbing social mechanism. It pulls the interest of individuals together and translates them into action. Its program is indigenous to the locality. It transmits local desires and efforts of people in local neighborhoods out into the stream of social and governmental processes where state, regional, and national issues and problems are considered and acted upon. It is a device through which people in small social units effectively share in the affairs of the larger society. It is a method of mobilizing and activating community energy.

In contrast, an agency is a dispenser of services. It brings to the locality special technical skills and financial resources to assist in dealing with such specific problems as health, unemployment, conservation, housing, marketing, and farm credit. It is a vertical organization in the sense that the local programs of operation constitute the base for a unit of operation that pyramids upward on a state, regional, or national basis. It has the advantage of financial support and professional and technical skills that are provided from resources outside the community. It frequently has the disadvantage of sponsoring and supporting a program that does not emerge from the local community and that is sometimes not acceptable to it.²

Because of the nature of their organization and purposes, most agencies have adopted the policy of working through and with existing community institutions and organizations in every way possible. Adherence to this principle of operation has extended to the schools an "open-door" invitation for coöperation in activities related to the education of children and adults.

THE EXTENSION SERVICE

The Agricultural Extension Service is the best known and perhaps the most firmly established agency in rural community life. The work of the county agent, home demonstration agent, and 4-H Club leader has become so firmly and completely integrated into the pattern of living in rural agricultural communities that these people are seldom thought of as representatives of a special agency. Their relationships to the state and federal government have been so completely submerged in local programs of services that they are practically unnoticed by the typical rural citizen.

The Agricultural Extension Service is a coöperative agency with the federal government through the United States Department of Agriculture, the state college of agriculture, and the county government sharing in support and policy formation. The voluntary enlistment of farmers, farm women, rural teachers, and out-of-school youth as local

² S. Earl Grigsby and Harold Hoffsommer, *Rural Social Organization in Frederick County, Maryland*, University of Maryland, Agricultural Experiment Station, College Park, Maryland, March, 1949, Bulletin No. A51, p. 89.

leaders who assist the extension workers with many aspects of extension teaching is a vital part of the program. Brunner and Smith have estimated that the value of these voluntary contributions, even if computed on the basis of ordinary farm labor wages, far exceeds the combined financial contributions of all governmental units.³

The Extension Service is essentially an out-of-school educational program, organized on a county basis and operated through local communities and neighborhoods. Its purposes are to make better farms, better homes, and better people by placing the findings of research workers at the disposal of rural people. The practical side of agriculture and homemaking is the core of the program. It teaches by demonstrating how to do something about problems of immediate concern to rural people. It is the rural agricultural community's most important adult education program and it provides leadership for a well-organized educational program for children and youth.

The 4-H Club program is the strongest link between the schools and the Extension Service. Boys and girls between the ages of ten and twenty-one, organized in neighborhood and community clubs, become familiar with good farming and homemaking practices by working on specific projects carried out on their parents' farms or in their homes. Raising a pig, growing a calf, cultivating a garden, taking care of poultry, preserving foods, home decoration, furniture renovation, making clothing, and baking are typical 4-H Club projects. Frequently, teachers serve as local club leaders and in many school systems the club work has become an integral part of the regular instructional program, with much advantage to the children. In other instances, it is for the most part an extracurricular activity.

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

The Soil Conservation Service is an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture devoted to maintaining and improving soil fertility. Well-trained specialists employed by this agency assist farmers in preparing and putting into practice comprehensive soil conservation

³ Edmund deS. Brunner (ed.) and others, "Agricultural Extension in the United States," *Farmers of the World*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1945, p. 185.

plans. In this broadly outlined adult education program, soils are analyzed to discover plant food deficiencies, surveys are made to determine practical ways of controlling water and wind erosion, and plans are made for draining waterlogged soil or for bringing additional moisture to soils that are too dry to support plant growth.

Soil fertility is so vitally related to the welfare of people that it has claimed a prominent place in both the elementary and secondary school curriculum and in many states has become a part of the program for professional preparation of teachers. In Wisconsin a group of county superintendents responded to the request of classroom teachers for assistance in improving soil conservation instruction by arranging a group meeting with administrators and instructors of state teachers' colleges. Together, they developed a nine-week course offering in conservation which has become a part of the summer school programs of the teachers' colleges. Resource people from the State Conservation Commission and the Soil Conservation Service bring technical information to the students enrolled in these summer school courses.

In many counties committees of elementary teachers, agricultural teachers, high school principals, county extension workers, soil conservation specialists, and outstanding farmers have worked together under the leadership of county superintendents in identifying problems, evaluating instructional methods and materials, and outlining units of classroom work for each grade level. Many types of school and community activities have been developed as instructional devices. Rural Youth Conservation Day is an outstanding annual event in Marathon County, Wisconsin. This activity, jointly sponsored by the schools and the Chamber of Commerce in the county-seat town, involves as many as 2500 rural children in a program that emphasizes the satisfactions that can be derived from a thorough acquaintance with wild life and inanimate natural resources.

Clusters of trees planted by school children on wind-swept stretches of level plains and on eroded hillsides add to the beauty of the landscape and make important contributions to controlling wind and water erosions. The keen satisfactions children derive through these activities are the budding seeds of value patterns which will shape countless future decisions on the care and use of soils.

PUBLIC WELFARE DEPARTMENT

The method of meeting the responsibility of society as a whole for the care of persons who, because of physical and mental handicaps, immaturity, unemployment, and lack of resources, cannot take care of themselves properly has largely shifted since 1930 from charitable organizations and almshouses to an organized program supported by county, state, and national government. The agency through which services for such people are accomplished is the public welfare department, organized and operated at the county level. Care of dependent children is one of its major responsibilities.

In a study of the child welfare services in Rockland County, New York, Zaki noted four aspects of the program: "(1) aid to dependent children, (2) foster care of children, (3) maternity, infancy and child hygiene, and (4) services to physically handicapped children."⁴ In addition, such other services as home relief, workmen's compensation, old age assistance, and hospital care, which are usually part of the program of services provided by county welfare departments, are directly related to the welfare of children because of their influence on home and family life conditions.

There are many points at which the work of county welfare departments and the schools come together on common meeting grounds. Illness and indigency are among the most important causes of pupils' absence from school. In an approach to the administration of the attendance laws on the basis of removing the causes of nonattendance, close coöperation between the attendance officer and public welfare officials is indispensable.

Undernourishment, lack of proper clothing, and the insecurity of family life transmitted into the behavior patterns of children are common causes of social and mental maladjustments and consequent failure of children to make satisfactory adjustments to school life. Trained social case workers from the department of public welfare have an entree into homes where such conditions are prone to exist that is difficult for school personnel to gain. Their special competencies

⁴ Abd-El-Hamid Zaki, *A Study of Child Welfare in a Rural New York County*, Contributions to Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1947, No. 927, p. 81.

for identifying such problems make their case records a valuable source of information for teachers perplexed with so-called problem children. A tonsillectomy, a pair of glasses, or a pair of shoes provided to a needy child at the right time may well mean the difference whether he remains in school or drops out, and whether he becomes a respected, useful citizen or a burden on society.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

Public responsibility for safeguarding the health of people is met, for the most part, through public health departments maintained by local units of government. People living in cities are served by departments of health organized and operated as a part of municipal government. Health departments that serve rural people are usually a part of county government.

The professional staff of the well-organized public health department includes a medical health officer, a corps of nurses, a sanitary engineer, a bacteriologist, and a health educator. Much of the work of the department is of an administrative nature. It is responsible for seeing that water supplies are safe, that sanitary conditions are maintained in public eating places and public meeting places, that sewage disposal is safe and adequate. It enforces quarantine, promotes immunization programs, and inspects sources of food supply as measures to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. But keeping local communities and neighborhoods healthful places in which to live is a responsibility that demands much more than effective law enforcement. Public health workers have long recognized that enlightenment, understanding accepted practice, and well-established habits are the essentials of a healthful community environment. Consequently, much emphasis is given to health education through and with the schools.

Assignment of nurses by departments of public health for work in the schools on a full-time or part-time basis is common practice. Nurses work with children from the viewpoint of the total home, school, community environment. Emphasis is upon healthy living. The nurse counsels with pupils, advises with parents, and acts as a consultant to school staff members on health education problems. Where good

working relations between the school and the department of public health have been established, the nurse, in effect, becomes a member of the school staff.

The nurse assists the school physician in making physical examinations, works with parents and teachers in organizing health clinics and roundups, and helps with the immunization of pupils against communicable diseases. Her efforts to induce parents to take the necessary steps to have children's dental defects and physical impairments corrected are one of the most important educational services she provides in the community.

Coöperation between the schools and the department of public health is by no means limited to the provision of specialized types of health services. Sharing in long-range planning and support of experimental educational projects in nutrition, sex education, prevention of dental decay, speech correction, and classroom lighting and ventilation give new insights into the complex processes of child growth and development, and bring new methods and content for health education to the attention of teachers in every part of the county.

JUVENILE COURT

Coöperation between the office of the county superintendent of schools and juvenile courts is well illustrated by practice in Los Angeles County, California. In this large and populous county, nine special schools have been established by the county board of supervisors at the request of county juvenile court officials. These schools are financed by the county through appropriations by the county board of supervisors, but are operated under the administration of the county school superintendent. An assistant superintendent is directly responsible for their operation.

These schools have been organized to meet the needs of children who are homeless, who are habitual truants, or who have had a first brush with the law. Children are enrolled only upon the recommendation of the juvenile court. Each school is a residential institution. The programs are organized for the safekeeping of children for their own protection, and for the protection of the public in the case of the most

serious delinquents. Emphasis is given to preparing the children to return to their own homes and to assume normal places in the regular school programs. Without such schools, juvenile delinquents would of necessity be sent by the juvenile courts to county or state institutions in which corrective educational advantages are not as well organized and administered.⁵

Not all children who come to the attention of juvenile courts or who are sent to juvenile detention homes are delinquents. A case history from the juvenile court records in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, illustrates the deplorable conditions in which children are sometimes left.

"George and Mabel were neglected children. Their mother had deserted them. Their father, in turn, felt he had met his obligation by placing them for care in the home of a prostitute. When she was arrested for disorderly conduct, the plight of these children was brought to the attention of the juvenile court."⁶

The average length of time spent by children in the Allegheny County Detention Home in 1947 was 29.3 days.⁷ Much of this time is spent at work in an educational program staffed and maintained by the Pittsburgh Board of Education. Since the children come from many different age groups, levels of intelligence, and backgrounds of experience, much of their school work is individually directed. While detained in the detention home, a child continues to be enrolled in the school he last attended so that he can take up his work again, after his release, without serious loss of time.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

The state traffic police officers stationed in the county, with headquarters usually in the county seat town, work closely with the schools on problems and projects related to public safety. Law enforcement is the police officer's first responsibility, but he readily recognizes edu-

⁵ C. C. Trillingham, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools*, Los Angeles County Board of Education, Los Angeles, 1951, pp. 74-77.

⁶ Juvenile Court of Allegheny County, *Focus the Child*, Annual Report, the Court, Pittsburgh, 1947, p. 17.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

cation as his most important weapon. Consequently, he takes advantages of every possible opportunity to aid the schools in their program of safety education.

In many county school systems, traffic police officers work closely with the schools in establishing criteria for the selection of school bus drivers, conducting training programs for bus drivers, and periodic inspection of school transportation equipment.

There are but few activities in the entire community educational program that claim the attention of so many agencies and organizations or offer as much opportunity for school-agency coöperation as high school driver education. Automobile clubs, safety councils, and insurance companies are eager to help with any program which promises to reduce motor vehicle accidents. Civic groups see in the driver educational program a large measure of safety for the children in the community. Licensing authorities appraise the program as they examine the trainees prior to issuing drivers' permits. And the highway patrolmen judge the effectiveness of the program by the driving practices of students on the streets and highways.

In West Virginia a committee consisting of five county superintendents, three high school principals, a representative of the state department of education, a faculty member from one of the colleges in the state, the secretary of the state road commission, the director of highway safety, and the head of the accident prevention division of the department of public safety, working under the direction of the state superintendent of public instruction, developed a course of study for a full-semester course in driver education which is flexible enough for use in both large and small high schools. In many states, the highway patrolman who makes the examination for the issue of drivers' licenses excuses from the written part of the examination applicants who have successfully completed the high school driver training program.

In rural counties outside the area served by municipal police officers, state highway patrolmen assist principals and superintendents in organizing school patrols. These associations have done much toward establishing in the children a proper attitude toward police officers, and at the same time have made a worth-while contribution toward

the safety of children as they cross streets and highways on their way to and from school.

FORMALLY ORGANIZED GROUPS

Rural social life is characterized by numerous organizations through which interest is expressed and action is taken. In a study of social organization in Goodhue County, Minnesota, a typical Midwestern dairy farming county, Alexander and Nelson identified 428 different active social organizations with elected or appointive officials, fairly well-defined membership rosters, and scheduled programs of activities planned in terms of stated objectives.⁸ With conflict in purposes of different organizations, rivalry for group prestige, and the inevitable overlapping of membership, rural life has become an interwoven web of complex relationships.

But this is rural life, functioning in a manner that more clearly exemplifies the fundamental principles of democracy than any other segment of our national culture. In and through these organizations, issues are considered, opinions are formed, decisions are made, and actions are initiated. Many of these decisions and actions are directly related to the purposes, organization, and operation of the schools. It is a privilege and an opportunity rather than a duty or responsibility for the county superintendent to work with these groups. His big problem is to know them, know their purposes, know their leaders and membership, and know how to coördinate the social energies inherent in these organizations with the interests and efforts of the school.

The number of social organizations, even in a small, sparsely settled county, is far too numerous to consider here in detail. The few examples cited are merely illustrative.

THE FARMERS UNION

The Farmers Educational and Coöperative Union of America is an organization of farm families which works toward the general objective of security for the farm family on the land. This organization was founded in Texas in 1902. Membership grew rapidly. As early as

⁸ National Society for the Study of Education, *Education in Rural Communities*, Fifty-First Yearbook, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1952, Part II, p. 41.

1907, the Farmers Union was recognized as one of the major farm organizations in the country. It continues to hold this position and exercises a strong influence on the formation of general agricultural policy and the enactment of legislation at state and national levels. The activities of the organization are organized around a triangular program with education as the base and coöperation and legislation symbolized as altitudinal lines coming together at the apex of the triangle.

The educational program of the Farmers Union is planned for three age groups: (1) study units for children ages eight to fourteen, designated in the program as reserves; (2) study units for juniors, fourteen to twenty-one years of age; and (3) a program for adults which gives consideration to current agricultural problems and issues. Sustaining and strengthening membership in the organization is one of the important purposes of this well-organized continuous educational program, but in achieving this purpose it deals, in a constructive manner, with some of the basic problems and issues of rural life.

In the program for reserves, children eight to fourteen years of age, there are units of work dealing with weeds in the garden, birds who are good neighbors, insects, trees, conservation of natural resources, and the simple relationships of people to each other in family and community life.

The program for juniors emphasizes group leadership, public speaking, recreation, history and philosophy of farm organization, the farmer and his government, and the principles of coöperatives. Study packets on such subjects as health, farm credit, coöperatives, conservation, and important legislation are prepared and distributed for use of adults. Most state organizations sponsor regular radio programs on statewide hookups and many county units have regular programs on local stations.⁹

In a state where the Farmers Union is strong and active, a great amount of the energy of rural people goes into this educational program which operates parallel to the regular public school program. Skillful teachers, meaty and palatable curriculum materials, and care-

⁹ Floyd W. Reeves, *Education for Rural America*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1945, pp. 200-207.

ful orientation to life on the farms and in the homes make it an important force in rural education. The extent to which this program can be coordinated with the work of the schools with mutual benefit to both is a matter of local policy determination. Obviously, the school cannot become an agency of propaganda for any particular special-interest group, no matter how worthy its purposes may be; but to the extent that the resources and activities of special interest groups can contribute to the broad purposes of public education, failure to utilize them is failure to use the community's full educational potential for the enlightenment and development of its people.

Farmers Union interest in education is by no means limited to its own organized and operated program. This organization has been a strong supporter of public education and time and again has cooperated closely with public education leaders in resolving difficult problems. Interest in public education is well illustrated by the attention the Farmers Union in North Dakota has given to local school district reorganization.

Following legislative enactment in this state in 1947 providing for the creation of school district reorganization committees in each county to prepare plans and initiate action leading to reorganization, the Farmers Union, in cooperation with county superintendents, the state department of education, and colleges and universities in the state, arranged a state conference of rural people in which this problem was considered. The assembly rooms in the state Farmers Union building were used for meeting places and many of the participants were housed in the hotel rooms of the state building at reasonable rates. Furthermore, the Farmers Union provided the financial resources needed to bring several special consultants on school district reorganization to the conference from outside the state.

THE FARM BUREAU

The American Farm Bureau Federation, organized in 1919, is a federation of the state farm bureaus in forty-six states and Puerto Rico. It has a membership of almost 1.5 million farm families. Translated into the number of individual adults who are members, the total membership in 1950 exceeded 3 million.

Since each state farm bureau is autonomous, there is much variation in organization and programs of operation. This variation ranges from the highly organized and well-financed programs in states like Illinois and Iowa with budgets of a half million dollars or more to the more modestly financed programs in Southern and Eastern states where fewer membership services are provided. There is also considerable variation in concepts of the function of the Farm Bureau. For example, the New York State Farm Bureau conceives its function to be largely of an educational nature—education being interpreted broadly. In contrast, the organization in some states places a great deal of emphasis on coöperative business enterprises and services to the membership.¹⁰

The unit of membership in state farm bureaus is the county organization. Farmers who join the county farm bureau automatically become members of the state organization, and through the federation of state farm bureaus have a direct channel for expressing their opinions and taking action at the national level.

The county organization is responsible for the policies upon which its program is based, insofar as it is applicable to the county. Part of the membership fees is retained by the county organization to finance its program. Many county organizations, particularly in the Midwestern states, own their own buildings and employ staffs of agricultural specialists and clerical assistants.

A county organization may be made up of twenty or more community or township local farm bureau units. A countywide meeting is held once or twice each year for general policy-forming purposes, but most county organization work is done under the direction of its officers and executive committee. With as many as half and sometimes even more of the citizens in an agricultural county enrolled as active members of the county farm bureau, the position this organization takes on any general educational issue or problem is a significant expression of public opinion. The county superintendent and other educational leaders cannot be guided wholly by the public opinion expressed or the action taken by this large, well-organized group, for they are

¹⁰ O. M. Kile, *The Farm Bureau Through Three Decades*, The Waverly Press, Baltimore, 1948, p. 373.

equally responsible to the citizens who are not identified with the organization, but from actual experience county superintendents know full well that any aspect of the educational program is on a reasonably firm footing when it is strongly supported by an active county farm bureau.

The community and township units of the Farm Bureau are made up of from ten to twenty-five families. At regular intervals throughout the year these units meet, under the leadership of the county organization or the Agricultural Extension Service, which is sponsored by the Farm Bureau in several states, to consider problems and issues about which farm people must make decisions. The Farm Bureau Creed, which is sometimes recited in unison by the group at the opening of the meeting, illustrates the nature and purpose of these meetings: "I have united with these friends and neighbors to enjoy a social hour, to study our common problems, to support through the Farm Bureau the organized effort which is essential to the welfare and prosperity of agriculture to the end that such cooperation may provide a comfortable living for my family, education for my children, and independence for my old age."¹¹

The preparation and adoption of resolutions in general countywide meetings are important means of shaping policy and establishing viewpoints on local, state, and national issues. The following recommendations made in the resolutions adopted by a Minnesota county farm bureau illustrate some of the interest of the organization in public education:

1. Recommended an educational campaign concerning desirability of high school education for farm youth.
2. Recommended rural school districts take advantage of state aid for transporting pupils to and from school.
3. Recommended that adjustments in high school curricula be made to meet more adequately the needs of rural youth.¹²

¹¹ Floyd W. Reeves, *Education for Rural America*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1945, pp. 178-179.

¹² An adaptation from a report by Frank D. Alexander and Lowry Nelson, *Rural Social Organization in Goodhue County*, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, 1949, Bulletin No. 401, p. 36.

The school system, the tax structure, the highways, the character of farming, and the quality of rural family living in every section of the country reflect the ideals and bear witness to the efforts of the Farm Bureau. For three decades it has been one of the greatest forces in America for improving rural living. As such, it has been a staunch ally of the schools in local community council circles and in state legislative halls.

NATIONAL GRANGE

The Grange is the oldest and one of the largest major farm organizations in this country. In 1866 President Andrew Johnson authorized the Commissioner of Agriculture to send a representative of the federal government on a trip through the Southern states to study conditions of farm life with the end in view of recommending measures that would aid in reestablishing Southern agriculture on a sound productive basis. Oliver Hudson Kelly, a Boston Yankee, was selected to make the study.

Kelly had vision enough to recognize that more than legislative enactment was needed to help Southern farmers recover from the wartime ravages. Some general movement had to be started which would break down the social isolation of farm families and bring them together on common ground to work toward the solution of their own problems on the basis of understanding and mutual aid. Consequently, on his return to Washington in 1867 he took the initiative in founding the Patrons of Husbandry, or National Grange as it is commonly known.¹³

The Grange is a fraternal order of men and women that is active in every general section of the country, but is particularly strong in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and the New England states.¹⁴ Local units of the organization are known as subordinate granges. The masters and matrons of the subordinate granges are the voting dele-

¹³ Everett E. Edwards, "American Agriculture—The First 300 Years," *Farmers in a Changing World*, Yearbook of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1940, p. 259.

¹⁴ In 1951 there were state grange organizations in thirty-seven states. The states not having grange organizations were Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, and Utah.

gates in the state grange. The Pomono Grange is an organization that functions usually at the county level. Fourth-degree members of local units are eligible for membership in the Pomona Grange. The National Grange, which meets annually, is made up of the masters and matrons of state granges.¹⁵

Every local grange unit wants to own its own hall. More than half of the 7150 subordinate granges in the country have realized this ambition. The grange hall, which frequently consists of no more than a large assembly room with an adjoining kitchen and a few small ante-rooms used in the ceremonial and dramatic work of the organization, is located in the rural community or neighborhood center close to the people who use it. It is a community center where farm people meet to study and discuss current issues and governmental affairs. Here public opinion is formed. Here are started the letters, telegrams, and resolutions to the state legislative assembly, the governor, congressmen, senators, and the President himself which express opinions, urge action, and give farm people, even in the most isolated and remote areas of the country, a share in forming public policy and in determining the character of legislation enacted at state and national levels.

The term "grass roots" is frequently used by speakers and writers to describe social action that is closely identified with the lives of people; but fully to understand and appreciate the meaning of this term one must take part in a meeting of a subordinate grange in a rural agricultural community.

About eight o'clock on a winter evening, automobiles and farm trucks, with wheels and fenders caked with the ice and snow of country roads, pull up at the vacant lot back of the grange hall in the village center. Out of these vehicles climb farm families—men and women with small children in their arms snugly wrapped in overcoats and blankets against the biting cold, and older boys and girls carrying heavy baskets from which pungent smells of freshly baked pies and cakes and country hams escape as the sharp wind lifts the covers. Up the stairway they climb to the grange hall above. A roaring fire in the

¹⁵ Dwight Sanderson, *Rural Sociology and Rural Social Organization*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1942, pp. 506-513.

big pot-bellied stove soon drives the chill out of the assembly hall, and the little children begin to romp around the floor.

The audience gathers slowly because farm people have a lot of chores to do around the farm and home before they can get away to an evening meeting. By nine o'clock everyone has arrived and the people, gathered in little clusters, gossiping about calves and lambs and babies and the weather, take places in the straight-backed chairs around the wall in preparation for the formal opening of the meeting. The guest speaker, who has been invited to discuss a proposal for school district reorganization, is hustled off to an anteroom with the older children, for he is not a Grange member. Only members can take part in or observe the secret ceremonial with which the meeting is opened.

Under the direction of the farm woman, who acts as a counselor and leader, the young people in the anteroom formally open the meeting of the Juvenile Grange, an organization for children up to the age of fourteen, when they become eligible for membership in the Adult Grange. With careful attention given to procedures, they enter into a discussion of a scrap-drive project the group has under way. The visitor is much impressed with this youth leadership training program, operating in a simple, unassuming manner, but effectively preparing young people for the positions they will soon take as active members of the adult organization.

In a short time a knock on the door signals that the business meeting has ended. The visitor goes out of the anteroom with the children, nervously clutching the notes from which he will speak. As he chats with one of the leaders, he notes that chairs are being rearranged and that most of the young children are again wrapped in their blankets, quietly sleeping on chairs and benches pushed up against the wall in the back corners of the room. The visitor is a bit impatient to be on with the program because the hour is getting late, but no one else seems to be in a hurry.

After the room is arranged, a leader who is the grange lecturer sharply raps a desk with the gavel for attention, but instead of introducing the guest speaker announces that a one-act play will be presented by a cast of grange members under the direction of Sister Swan-

son, teacher at the Hickory Corner School. The speaker relaxes and settles back in his chair with an attitude of mild interest, for this is his first experience in a grange meeting. Somewhat to his surprise, he is delighted with the quality and spirit of the acting and joins the audience in enjoying it.

After the dramatic presentation ended, the speaker was introduced in a simple and informal manner. At this late hour he expected the audience to be tired and listless, but to the contrary it was alert and responsive. Nevertheless, he found himself hurrying through his presentation, and within half an hour finished and sat down expecting the meeting to be adjourned immediately. But he still had something to learn about grange meetings. When the speaker arose and asked if anyone wanted to make any further inquiries into the proposals the speaker had made, questions came rapidly from every section of the room.

This was the high point of the evening's program and no member showed any inclination to treat it lightly. They wanted information about teachers, curriculum, transportation, bonding power, tax rates, and administrative control that would assist them in making intelligent decisions on the issue when the time of decision arrived.

At the end of a half-hour of lively and pointed discussion, this part of the meeting adjourned. But there was more to come. Out of the kitchen came a group of young men and older girls with steaming pots of black coffee, thick ham sandwiches, and generous pieces of home-baked pies and cakes. The grangers could not go home until they had enjoyed the fellowship of eating together. It was another feature of the program which gave unity and solidarity to the organization.

The clock on the village church steeple was striking the hour of midnight as the lights in the grange hall were extinguished and the last automobile, coughing and sputtering protests against the chill of the winter night, pulled out of the vacant lot behind the grange hall.

There was a feeling of satisfaction on the part of the visitor as he began his long journey back to the city—a satisfaction that came from having caught a new vision of the dignity of men, a new vision of the deep significance of the relationships between men, women, and chil-

dren in family life, a new vision of democracy functioning in the lives of people, a new vision of the strength and soul of rural America.

OTHER RURAL ORGANIZATIONS

These farm organizations, common in rural life throughout the country, have been discussed in considerable detail to illustrate the processes and purposes achieved through rural social organization. They are but three of many comparable organizations through which rural people shape their institutions, their culture, their lives, and their destinies. Without the expression and opportunities they provide to people in every walk of life, society might well become the master of men, ruthlessly bending their will to preconceived ideals and purposes. The collective initiative and social energies of people exercised through social organization make government the servant of people and make men masters of society, developing themselves as they bring its customs, its traditions, and its standards into closer harmony with the purposes and achievements of free people.

The school cuts, on a horizontal plane, through all community organizations. The educational program is tempered by their special interests and supported by many of their activities. A youth group emphasizes recreation, the Legion directs special attention to citizenship, a dairy breeders' association promotes special agricultural instruction, a coöperative association insists that more attention be given to marketing farm products, a farm women's club seeks to strengthen instruction in home and family life, a religious group calls for more emphasis on moral and spiritual values, and a young mothers' club wants nursery schools and kindergarten classes established.

These are the dynamics of community life that shape the educational program and bring it into harmony with the interest and needs of people. Frequently, there are conflicting viewpoints and opinions. As superintendents, board members, and teachers caught in crosscurrents are puzzled and perplexed almost to the point of despair, they sometimes protest against the conflicting pressures on the school and long for clear-cut mandates from the people. But as they analyze these forces more carefully, they do not regard them as undesirable pressures.

Rather, they are seen as a flow of the social energy of a free people shaping a pliant, flexible institution that serves their interests and needs.

By no means is all the educational energy of rural social organizations exerted in the form of demands on teachers, superintendents, and boards of education. Many of the activities supplement the work of the school and broaden the scope of the program. A Kiwanis Club assists children from underprivileged families in securing badly needed eyeglasses; a Rotary Club organizes and gives leadership to a juvenile softball league; the Legion sponsors a citizenship program that gives older youth close-up experiences in local and county government; a sportsmen's club assists in developing a school camp or a school forest; and the Chamber of Commerce helps boys and girls in the 4-H Club and vocational agricultural classes in getting started with such productive educational enterprises as growing purebred pigs, sheep, and dairy cows.

DEMANDS ON THE SCHOOL

Not all of the relationships between the schools and the agencies and organizations of community life flow along a one-way street with the schools at the receiving end. Many demands are made on the time and energies of pupils and teachers.

Time and time again the schools are asked to assist in collecting food, clothing, and funds for altruistic purposes. The Community Chest fund, the Red Cross drive, the tuberculosis seal campaign, the March of Dimes campaign, and Bundle Day to collect clothing for people in war-ravaged Korea are but a few of the many demands made on the schools to assist with worthy community activities.

Governmental agencies turn to the schools for help in the sale of defense stamps and bonds and to collect paper and metal scrap needed in meeting critical shortages. The volunteer fire department asks for their assistance in raising funds needed to purchase a new fire truck. The fair association enlists their aid in putting on the annual county or community fair. And the community improvement league wants them to take a major part in the farm-field day.

Enthusiastic special-interest groups invite pupils to participate in

oratorical and essay contests, urge them to share in public safety and health campaigns, and offer to supply them with a flood of attractively written and illustrated materials related to a host of projects, problems, and issues.

The number of such invitations and requests is rapidly increasing and the nature of many of the demands has become more complex. Some discrimination must be used and some critical decisions must be made. To take advantage of all such opportunities would be to permit far too great an infringement on the time and energies of pupils and teachers. It almost seems that it might lead to a situation in which there would be little time left for them to do anything else. To refuse to take part in these activities would be to isolate the schools from many activities of community life that are rich with learning opportunities for children. When to say yes and when to say no has become a problem of serious concern to people charged with administrative responsibilities in rural school systems.

Many community school systems are attempting to meet the problems by establishing advisory committees comprised of members of the professional staff of the school, older pupils, and parents. Membership on such committees is kept small because it is a work committee. These committees evaluate materials, projects, and proposals, check them against the purposes and activities of the school, and make recommendations to the superintendent. Final decision is made by the superintendent and the school board. The following general criteria have been used by these committees as guides to their activities:

1. Is the nature and intent of the project or activity in harmony with the purposes of the school?
2. Will the time and energy consumed be directed toward general public welfare or toward the promotion of private interest?
3. Is the material used factually and scientifically accurate and sound?
4. Is the sponsoring agent well established, reliable, and accepted in the community?
5. Does the activity offer opportunity for child growth and learning that is not provided in the regular school program?
6. Are children being exploited in the name of education?

7. Does the time budget of the school permit participation without displacing other projects or activities that are equally or more valuable to the pupils?
8. Are there people in the school who can assume the necessary leadership responsibilities?
9. Does the project or activity make too great a demand on the time and energies of teachers?
10. Does it directly or indirectly involve the school with obligations which it cannot or should not be called upon to meet?

THE COMMUNITY IN ITS TOTALITY

Rural community life is not an open book that is easy to read. Neither are there clear-cut, infallible indices by which it trends and interests can be identified and its behavior predicted. The superintendent, responsible for trying to see it in its totality and for working with its many-sided existence, must glean insights, truths, and guiding principles from its crosscurrents, conflicts, and paradoxes. Many times important decisions must be made before the evidence is all in. The ultimate test of good administration is not in what is done about things that are sure and certain but in what is done to meet problems that are not clearly discernible or that are unforeseen.

When community sentiment toward the school is still quiet and unruffled, when complaints are few and protests far between, there is perhaps most need for superintendents to be alert and watchful. Soil fertility and weather conditions suitable for a luxuriant growth of corn are also conducive to the growth of weeds and brambles. If weeds do not grow, conditions may not be right for the growth of cultivated plants and the harvest may be meager. This is not to imply that a school should always be involved in an endless controversy; but where progress is made, well-established practices and procedures are disturbed, and questions and protests as well as words of encouragement are to be expected along the raw growing edges. These are the expressions, both negative and positive, that are most useful to school administrators in recognizing needs, sensing dangers, and giving leadership and guidance to the community's educational program.

Sociologists have pointed out that rural community life is "splin-

tered,"¹⁶ implying the lack of a unifying core. Well-organized special-interest groups and strong administrative agencies move down separate streets, each toward its own immediate goals and objectives, without much regard for the strategy of overall community planning. They stand apart like segments of a splintered oak, with only shivered fragments here and there knitting them together and giving them unity. The school more nearly than any other institution of community life claims the interest and shares in the support of every segment. It is a product of their efforts and at the same time a powerful integrating agent.

Effective working relationships between the school and other organizations, agencies, and institutions of rural community life cannot be developed in an incidental, "catch-as-catch-can" manner. Long-range plans based on sound principles of educational leadership and rural social organization must be made. The county superintendent together with the members of his staff who have a large share of responsibility for initiating such planning:

1. Give close attention to keeping open avenues of communication between the school and the agencies and organizations. Positive steps are taken to close the gap between people who have specialized knowledge and skills and those who are the recipients of the school's services.
2. Become familiar with the purposes and resources of every agency and organization.
3. Acquaint each agency and organization fully with the purposes, needs, and problems of the school and call on them for assistance with specific projects. Interest is sharpened and support is intensified when the relationships between the school and an agency pass beyond broad generalizations to programs of action.
4. Exercise care to prevent the schools from becoming a proving ground for organized groups whose purposes and procedures are not well understood and accepted in community life.
5. Strive to bring about a reasonable degree of consolidation and coördination of the educational activities of nonschool agencies and organizations. The resources available for educational purposes in rural community life are too meager to be wasted in needless overlapping and competition. There is more than enough for all to do.

¹⁶ *Education in Rural Communities*, p. 40.

6. Plan a program that provides an opportunity for every worthy, sincere, and honest organization and agency to make a worth-while contribution to the overall program of community education.
7. Allocate time in their schedule of activities to work with organizations and agencies. There is, perhaps, nothing that will alienate people from the schools more quickly than the general feeling that the superintendent and his staff are too busy and too hurried to talk and plan with them.
8. Give careful consideration to suggestions and proposals from every organization and agency. Each is an important part of the community. Each has a right to be heard. Each feels some responsibility for community education and is disturbed if it cannot meet it.

Good personal relations is the key that opens the door to effective working relations between the school and other institutions, agencies, and organizations in rural community life. Good administration, no matter how carefully it is planned, cannot be reduced to a formula or mechanical operation. The superintendent who is successful sees organizations and agencies, not as impersonal social mechanisms that exert pressure on the schools or stand ready to be called into use in times of stress and need, but as groups of sincere people who want to be somebody, who want to have a worth-while part in something that is important, and who are usually acting as best they know at any given time.

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Rural life, rural organizations, rural institutions, rural government, and rural cultural patterns are treated as a process in this authoritative publication. Factual information is in relation to what people do and where they live.

Personnel Accounting

The need for accurate information concerning the status and activities of pupils and of employees in the school system increases with refinement and improvement in methods of instruction and with each addition to the educational program. Test scores, indications of special aptitudes, physical characteristics, recreational interests, home and family life conditions, cultural background, place of residence, immunization records, and many other items of similar nature constitute the background of information deemed to be essential in successfully guiding children in their school activities.

Of a somewhat different nature, but almost equally comprehensive, is the information concerning professional and other school employees that must be compiled, systematically recorded, and filed for ready use by administrative school officials and educational-policy-forming bodies. Preservice preparation, indications of in-service professional growth experience, certification status, health conditions, efficiency ratings, sick leave, salary increments, retirement accumulations, and income tax deductions are but a few of the many items of information that need to be recorded and kept available for ready use in every well-administered school system.

Such information is fundamental to the formation of sound educational policy and to efficient operation in every school system, yet school administrators and teachers need to be constantly on guard to prevent the educational program for which they are responsible from becoming top-heavy with reports and records. Accuracy, thoroughness, simplicity, uniformity, unsability, and lack of duplication of effort—

enough but not too much—are watchwords which serve educational leaders well in planning a system of personnel records.

RECORDS FOR THE INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT OFFICE

Developing a satisfactory system of personnel records in an intermediate district type of county school administration is, in some respects, a unique problem. Stronger local districts, such as well-organized community school districts and town and village systems, are in a position to maintain well-organized systems of personnel accounting for both pupils and school employees. In smaller school districts, records that provide essential information are likely to be much less complete and are sometimes lost through lack of provisions for permanent filing. Where such conditions exist, there is an obvious need for maintaining a system of records, particularly records of a permanent nature, in a central office. Furthermore, many of the administrative functions that have been assigned to county superintendents, such as allocating school funds of various types, handling work permits, supervising transfer of pupils, and executing policy pertaining to certification, salary schedules, retirement, sick leave, and physical health, require that working files of pertinent information be kept in their offices. The function to be performed and the purpose to be achieved determine, in a large part, the character of the records needed as well as where they should be kept.

The recent tendency for intermediate district organizations to provide an increasing number of educational services to supplement the educational programs in local districts—as, for example, special opportunities for physically handicapped children, supervision of attendance, programs for emotionally and socially maladjusted children, outdoor education, health services, and supervision of instruction—points to the need for additional personnel records in the county superintendent's office. Planning cannot be done well nor programs effectively executed except upon the basis of authentic, pertinent information. It should be pointed out, however, that it would be unwise, impracticable, and unsound to maintain files of duplicate copies or the originals of all essential records directly related to such programs in a central office. Many of these educational services are provided on a basis of coopera-

tion between the county superintendent's office and local districts. This coöperation should include keeping records and the use of records as well as the employment of personnel and actual provision of services.

PLANNING A CENTRAL OFFICE RECORD SYSTEM

The following criteria have proven to be useful guides in planning a system of personnel records for a central office in an intermediate district type of organization:

1. Individual pupil records kept in the central office should be limited to:
 - a. Sources of information used for purposes that involve children from several schools in an organized program of activity. For example, in one school system special studies are made of all children who do not appear to be making normal progress in first-grade work. Files of these special case studies are kept in the central office for ready use by consultants who give special attention to remedial instruction.
 - b. Records that must be used frequently by central office staff workers.
 - c. Records of a specialized nature that are not kept in local school districts but that provide essential information for planning and conducting the program operated at the intermediate district level.
 - d. Records of a permanent nature that may be lost because of inadequate provisions for filing in local districts.
2. Individual records of employees in local school systems that are pertinent to administrative functions definitely assigned to the county superintendent's office. To illustrate, in some states county superintendents are responsible for seeing that certification standards prescribed by the state are met, for recommending renewal of certificates, and for enforcing maintenance of minimum salary schedules based on experience and preparation. Performance of such administrative functions requires that appropriate files of essential information be maintained.
3. In general, records should be kept as close to the place of most frequent use as administrative organization and facilities will permit.
4. Any part of the system of record keeping which requires duplicate copies is a point that should receive serious consideration for improvement. The system of records is an aid to instruction and administration—a service function. In a sense, it is a nonproductive part of the school system. Without adequate records, plans cannot be made on a sound basis nor executed in an efficient manner. Pupils, teachers, administra-

tors, and parents are placed at a serious disadvantage when a satisfactory system of personnel records is not maintained. But records in and of themselves have but little purpose. Compiling and organizing information for which there is no use is a waste of time and energy and has no place in a well-organized and administered school system.

Personnel records in county superintendents' offices in county-unit types of organization are comparable in most respects to the system of records in city school systems. Information needed for forming overall educational policy and in the details of general administration is usually kept in the central office. Records pertaining to the processes of classroom instruction and to pupil personnel services are kept in local school offices and classrooms close to the pupils and to the teachers who use them frequently.

PURPOSES OF PERSONNEL RECORDS

The purposes of personnel records, whether they relate to pupils or to employees, are to help the school achieve its educational objectives. Records constitute a system of aids extending horizontally across the entire constellation of school operational functions, assisting with the administrative aspects of planning, coordinating, and executing; and providing a sound basis of understanding of the relationships between pupils, teachers, supervisors, administrators, and parents and between the school and the community as a whole in the processes of teaching and learning.

The character and form of personnel records vary with state school laws and administrative organization as well as with methods of instruction and administrative procedures, but there are also elements common to all well-organized systems. The general purposes of personnel records in county superintendents' offices may be summarized as follows:

1. To assist in complying with state laws and regulations concerning the distribution of state and county school funds, pupil transportation, pupil transfers from one district to another, compulsory school attendance, child labor regulations, health and safety measures, and education of children in families of migratory agricultural workers.

2. To assist in complying with regulations and policies—state and local—pertaining to certification of professional workers, salary schedules, sick leave, promotion, and tenure.
3. To provide a factual background of information for policy formation, school plant planning, and development of instructional methods and administrative procedures.
4. To assist in stimulating and guiding the in-service growth of teachers and other school employees.
5. To provide a factual basis for a program of school-public relations.
6. To assist in guiding the educational growth and development of individual pupils.
7. To assist in evaluating the educational program.

DIVISIONS OF SCHOOL RECORDS

There are three main divisions of school records, all of which have a relationship to pupil and staff personnel administration and are used to some extent in a well-organized county superintendent's office. These are (1) child accounting, (2) teacher and staff personnel records, (3) administrative records.

These three main divisions are subdivided by a wide variety of forms that meet the requirements of different schools and the regulations of state, county, and city school government.¹

CHILD ACCOUNTING

Keeping adequate pupil records is the essential feature of child accounting. The basic forms needed in a good system of child accounting are:

1. The individual child census card
2. The family census card
3. The individual child registration card
4. The pupil's daily schedule card
5. The pupil's permanent cumulative record.²

¹ *Modern Records for Schools*, Art Metal Construction Company, Jamestown, New York, p. 2.

² John Guy Fowlkes, "Modernizing Child Accounting Records," *American School and University*, Eleventh Annual Edition, American School Publishing Corporation, New York, 1939, p. 344.

Pupil personnel records that serve as efficient educational implements are uniquely adapted to the purposes, organization, and instructional methods of the school system. They emerge from the school's philosophy and reflect it in their form and use. They are part and parcel of the kit of working tools used by teachers, supervisors, and administrators.

One of the county superintendent's most important responsibilities in pupil personnel administration is to assist in every way possible in making child accounting records functional instruments in the county school system. To accomplish this end, many superintendents initiate study groups in which local district administrators, supervisors, and principals work together in developing the forms and procedures necessary to identify, compile, and use essential information. One good example of this practice is in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, an intermediate type of organization.

New developments in the guidance programs in the schools of Bucks County caused teachers to recognize more clearly the need for pupil personnel records which would provide continuous factual data and other types of significant information about pupils from the kindergarten through the twelfth grade. Records in use in the schools at the time this new and increased emphasis was given to guidance did not provide such a comprehensive picture of growth and development for each pupil.

Because of its major importance to pupils, teachers, and administrators, attention was directed first to the pupil's permanent cumulative record card. As a beginning, a representative work committee was initiated by the county superintendent at the beginning of the school year in 1948. With supervisory assistance of staff members from the county office, this committee spent one afternoon each month during the entire school year developing a cumulative record form and an explanatory manual suitable for use in all schools in the county.³

The folder-type record which resulted from the efforts of the work committee provides space for recording a complete history of each pupil's school experience and at the same time serves as a pocket for

³ *Manual of Instructions for Pupils Cumulative Record Cards*, Office of the County Superintendent of Schools, Bucks County, Doylestown, 1949, pp. 1-17.

preserving various kinds of informal information. These records are not made in duplicate. Consequently, they must be carefully guarded against loss. The records follow the pupils from the elementary school to the junior high school, and then to the senior high school where provisions are made for permanent filing. In cases of withdrawal at the elementary or junior high school level, records are sent to the permanent files in the high school.

In sparsely settled rural counties, where relatively large numbers of one-teacher schools are operating as autonomous administrative units, with a consistently high teacher turnover and where no one is in or about the school during the summer months, preserving records of children's school experience and keeping them available for ready reference create a special problem. In such situations, many county superintendents meet this problem by having permanent cumulative records turned into their offices by teachers at the close of the school year. During summer months clerical help in the county superintendent's office makes a duplicate copy of each record for a permanent file. At the beginning of the next school year the original copies, with adjustments made for any known transfers, together with other materials and supplies needed for the opening of school, are distributed to the schools for active classroom use.

The advantages of this procedure are that it:

1. Provides a means of preserving valuable records.
2. Makes information about any elementary school child in the county available at one central point.
3. Provides a measure of overall supervision resulting in keeping records in a reasonably uniform manner.

Obvious disadvantages of this procedure are:

1. The cost of clerical work involved.
2. The chances for error in copying records.
3. The difficulty in maintaining permanent filing space for a relatively large pupil population.

CUMULATIVE RECORDS

A comprehensive study of pupils' permanent cumulative records made by the United States Office of Education in 1944 revealed that

only 18 percent of the counties included in a nationwide sampling and 41 percent of city school systems were at that time using cumulative records of pupils' elementary and secondary school experiences. Undoubtedly, a considerably larger percentage of both county and city school systems are using such records now, but there is yet much opportunity for growth and improvement.

The basic data in these records included such personal items as date and place of birth, evidence of date of birth, sex, color or race, residence of pupil or parents, and religious affiliation; scholarship items including courses or subjects taken, school marks, rank in graduating class, average reading record, and special reports on subjects or courses failed or dropped; and general information such as family status, evidence of home conditions, health records, extracurricular activities, attendance, standardized test scores, and occupational plans.⁴

Since pupils' cumulative records are used throughout the child's school experience and are kept for reference purposes for years after graduation, precautions must be taken to make them legible and durable. All entries should be made with ink, preferably India ink. Record forms should be on good-quality paper. Specifications frequently call for stock with not less than 50 percent rag content.

SCHOOL CENSUS RECORDS

The school census is an official count of children and youth in the local administrative unit. It identifies each individual legally recognized by the school census law and keeps account of him until he is dropped from the official census records, usually because of exceeding the age limits or change in residence. Census ages, set by state laws, vary from state to state but generally include the age groups from six to twenty. There is a growing tendency in recent years toward a continuous school census beginning at birth and extending through age twenty-one.

In a questionnaire study which included responses from 851 county superintendents, the American Association of School Administrators found that continuing school census records were maintained by

⁴U.S. Office of Education, *Handbook of Cumulative Records*, a Report of the National Committee on Cumulative Records, 1944, Bulletin No. 5, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., pp. 1-12.

county superintendents in 22.8 percent of the nonunified counties, 46.8 percent of the county units, and 38 percent of the partially unified counties.⁵

In most states, taking the school census is a responsibility of local boards of education, but there are some exceptions. For example, in Michigan, taking the census in all school districts having a population of less than 3000 is a responsibility of the county board of education which is delegated to the county superintendent. In larger school districts in the state, local boards of education are responsible for the school census.

Three basic forms are used in handling the school census. The first is a census field sheet used by field workers in taking the school census. This is essentially a family census form which provides space for listing the names of parents and children recognized by the school census law in each family, together with such personal information as residence, citizenship status, sex, date of birth, place of birth, school in which pupil is enrolled, and any physical defects of children that are noted. A separate census field sheet is provided for each family so they may be arranged in appropriate order for transferring the information to office file census forms.

The second form is a family census card showing parents' names and place of residence, together with the names and birth dates of all children in the family, which is filed alphabetically in the central office. This record provides a ready means of identifying any child in the county or school district by family name and is the source of reference for handling transfers and tuition charges.

The third and most important form is the individual child census card. In smaller districts in which two or more schools are operated, individual child census cards are filed alphabetically in the central office by schools in which pupils are enrolled. In large school systems, these records are usually filed in the local schools in which the children are enrolled.

The use that is made of the school census records determines in a large measure where they can be filed to best advantage as well as the

⁵ American Association of School Administrators, *The American School Superintendency*, Thirtieth Yearbook, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1952, p. 331.

type of information which should be recorded. The first and most important function of these records is to ensure that all children of appropriate age are enrolled in school. To serve this purpose, they may be used to good advantage if filed in the local schools where principals and teachers have ready access to them, if responsibility for supervision of attendance is placed at this level of administration. In county units or intermediate district organizations where a general supervisor of attendance is employed, school census records quite obviously should be kept in his office.

A second purpose of the school census is to provide information needed in forming long-range educational policy, projecting school plant plans, and developing the school budget. The number of children in various age groups and where they live are most important measures of the local school boards' and of the state's educational responsibility. For this general administrative purpose, summary reports of the school census records are most useful. These summary statements may be sent to the county superintendent's office by local school district boards through their principals or superintendents, or prepared by staff workers in the central office if individual census records are filed there.

Administrative responsibilities of the county superintendent directly related to individual pupils is a third category of use for school census records. To illustrate, in Michigan, the county superintendent is charged with the responsibility of issuing work permits and age certificates.⁶ This is an important function, particularly so in an area adjacent to a large industrial center, that cannot be performed except upon the basis of reliable information such as is provided in the school census.

Pittenger has identified three general types of school census. First, a periodic census which involves a house-to-house canvass at regular intervals, usually annually, to enumerate children in the age groups legally recognized by the school census law. Second, a registration which corrects existing census lists, periodically, by adding the names of children who have moved into the district or who have reached legal age limits and deleting the names of children and youth who no longer meet the legal census requirements of the school district. The

⁶ Fred C. Fisher, *The Public Schools of Wayne County, Michigan*, Manual and Directory for 1952, Wayne County Board of Education, Detroit, p. 6.

third type is a continuous school census which attempts to keep complete up-to-date census records.

Securing accurate information promptly is one of the major problems in maintaining a continuous school census. In counties with relatively large centers of population, superintendents frequently rely on such agencies as transfer, telephone, electric light, and fuel supply companies; apartment house owners, supervisors of water supplies, and birth registration officials for information needed in keeping continuous school census records up to date. County superintendents in sparsely settled rural areas sometimes appoint small lay committees, with membership representing every section of the county, to report current changes in the school census.

STAFF PERSONNEL RECORDS

The various uses of staff personnel records may be roughly grouped into four broad, closely related categories. First, they provide information needed in exercising the broad administrative functions of planning, organizing, and controlling the different areas of activity involved in the educational program. Second, they are essential to the recruitment, orientation, placement, in-service development, and promotion of staff employees. Third, they provide a continuous body of factual data needed in evaluating staff personnel performance. And fourth, but by no means of least importance, they are the basis of various service functions to staff employees which contribute to their sense of security and efficiency.

ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTION

Making recommendations to boards of education for staff employment, promotions, and placement is one of the most important functions of the county superintendent, whether he is serving in an intermediate district type of organization or as chief executive officer of the board of education in a county unit. In almost every situation where such recommendations are made, there are some considerations of a subjective nature, which weigh heavily among the factors which distinguish a good teacher from one who is mediocre or poor, that have not yet been successfully reduced to objectively stated formulae. But at the same time,

there are a number of factors which have been identified and objectively defined in state laws, accreditation standards, and local school board policy that must be recognized. Minimum certification standards must be met. Salary schedules are frequently based on professional preparation and experiences. And areas of specialization in the instructional program call for special knowledge and competencies.

Each employee is an individual unit in the organization and management of the school system, whether it be large or small. He should receive personal attention and consideration. He cannot be treated in an abstract manner. His personal and professional qualifications must be identified. He should be given an opportunity to advance in the field of his major interest. Appropriations in the budget must be sufficient to pay his salary when it is due. The school will be stronger and better if he is assigned to a position that permits him to make full use of his special capabilities.

These few examples merely suggest the type of information that is needed and the use that is made of an adequate system of staff personnel records in exercising the broad function of general administration.

IN-SERVICE GROWTH

Initial employment is a critical point in the development of a good school staff, but even when the soundest and best-known procedures are followed, it is only a first step. A high-quality staff of professional and noncertified employees is a result of on-the-job growth and development of potentially capable people who are secure, contented, satisfied, and have personal pride in their positions.

Salary schedules in every part of the country have recognized the importance of this in-service growth factor by providing increments at regularly stated intervals based on experience. The most obvious disadvantage of this rule-of-thumb method of increasing teachers' salaries is that it allows just as much for poor experience as it does for good experience, and very little if any effort is made to determine whether or not any worth-while professional growth has been made during the intervals between increments. This is another example of how state school laws have outdistanced the leadership ability of county superintendents and local school administrators. Legislators

and state department of education officials have provided a legal framework within which a program for in-service growth of teachers and other professional employees can be developed and have spiked it with a financial incentive, but boards of education, superintendents, and other school leaders have taken little advantage of it.

Worth-while in-service growth does not just happen, like seasonal changes. It must be carefully planned, stimulated, and directed on the basis of objective information, sympathetic understanding, and a clear conception of the philosophy and purposes of the school. This is a function of school administration that is never completed. The school improves as it stirs the potential power of each individual and absorbs the strength of each unfolding professional career. In turn, each individual employee's stature increases as he is able to assume new and increasingly important responsibilities.

An adequate system of staff personnel records is the source of much of the factual information needed in stimulating and directing the in-service growth of school employees. He who assumes the responsibility for giving leadership to the professional growth and development of teachers and other school employees is treading on intimately personal grounds, whether he be a superintendent, principal, supervisor, department head, or foreman of a school maintenance crew, and cannot well escape responsibility for being thoroughly acquainted with the persons whom he proposes to lead. The woeful inadequacy of staff personnel records in many rural school systems has, undoubtedly, been an important factor in delaying the development of good in-service growth programs for school employees.

EVALUATING PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE

Evaluating personnel performance is at best a complex and difficult function to perform. But it is a responsibility the superintendent cannot escape. At regular intervals, he is called upon to render an account to the board or boards of education and to the general public, to whom he is responsible, of the performance of the people who work in the school system under his general direction. More often than not, this accounting takes the form of the superintendent's placing his general stamp of approval on individuals by recommending continuation of

employment status, promotions, or increase in salary. Such recommendations are matters of serious concern to the community and to the children enrolled in the schools, for the educational opportunities provided cannot be much better than the performance of the personnel employed in the schools. And to a very great extent, the superintendent is staking his own professional reputation on his recommendations. His status and prestige as a professional educational leader are, in the final analysis, determined by how well or how poorly the people who work under his direction perform.

In special instances, the superintendent may be called upon to defend a staff member against unwarranted attacks or to recommend dismissal. Evaluations of performance under such circumstances are no more important than evaluations made in a routine manner in regular school board meetings or individual teacher-supervisor conferences. In both instances, fair appraisal of the employee's work and unbiased consideration of the educational opportunities of the children in the community are the fundamental factors for consideration. The fact that an evaluation is made in one situation under circumstances of tenseness and social strain neither adds nor detracts from the importance of either of these fundamental factors.

But any superintendent who has had the responsibility of evaluating an employee's performance in the glaring light of aroused public attention fully appreciates the value of records to support the position he is called upon to take. One of the most frequently reported grievances of teachers in investigations of dismissals is that they have had no indication that their work was unsatisfactory and consequently no opportunity to make desirable changes.⁷ In such circumstances, superintendents are almost invariably embarrassed because they can produce no objective evidence from their personnel records that limitations and shortcomings have been called to the attention of the teachers and suggestions made for improvement.

The impression should not be left that personnel records are useful only in reporting on the quality of personnel performance to the board of education and to the community, or as an aid to the superintendent

⁷ National Commission for the Defense of Democracy Through Education, *Report of an Investigation—Oglesby, Illinois*, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1951, p. 21.

during periods of community tension created by difficult personnel problems. A far more important function is that of assisting in revealing the aptitudes, competencies, and strengths of employees so that personnel resources can be used to the best advantage and continuously developed as the instructional program of the community improves.

SERVICE FUNCTIONS

School systems which strive to maintain a climate in which all employees can work to good advantage and can develop their full potentialities try to prevent or to remove personally disturbing influences that detract from work efficiency. Many of the serious blocks to effective work are in the form of unanswered questions relative to the employee's position in the organization and irritations resulting from unfamiliarity with details of administration. Administrative services which clear up these questions and aid employees in meeting various types of requirements are marks of good professional relations and a worthwhile investment of time and effort.

Local school board policy and statutory regulations establish procedures governing renewal of certificates and contracts, sick leave, contributions to retirement funds, income tax withholdings, salary increments, physical examinations, and tenure. These are matters of personal concern to each employee which have their origin in the details of organization and administration. It is in the administrative offices that the information relative to each person and to each problem is kept. The superintendent or the member of his staff to whom he has delegated responsibility for personnel administration cannot safely assume that each and every employee is familiar with these regulations, or that he will take the necessary steps on his own initiative to comply with all requirements, even though meeting them is a personal responsibility.

An actual situation in a county unit of school administration well illustrates the responsibility of the superintendent in the renewal of teaching certificates. In this instance, the superintendent was serving his first year as a county school administrator. Staff personnel files in the office were grossly inadequate—almost nonexistent. All teaching

certificates were filed together in a large folder in alphabetic order. The superintendent was much more familiar with legal regulations governing the organization and operation of the schools than he was with principles and practices of personnel administration.

Near the close of the first month of school, he checked all of the certificates against the teachers' payroll because the law made it mandatory that each teacher have a valid teaching certificate on file in the county superintendent's office before she could receive any part of her salary. During this process of checking, he was greatly shocked and much embarrassed to discover that a valuable, well-liked, and respected teacher who had been employed in the school system for a number of years had failed to renew her certificate at its expiration date. She had received no notice that her certificate was expiring and believed she was properly certified. She had a certificate on file but it was no longer valid. Furthermore, she had not met the necessary requirement for renewal of six hours of professional course work in a recognized college or university during the life of the certificate. And she had taught almost an entire month for which she could not be legally paid from public school funds.

The superintendent was on legally safe grounds. Securing and filing a valid certificate in his office was a legal responsibility of the teacher, but his professional status was irreparably injured in the eyes of the entire teaching staff and the public. Even more serious was the fact that the educational opportunities of an entire classroom of children were seriously disturbed by having their instructional program disrupted.

Providing to employees the special services that are so much a part of good personnel administration is dependent in a large part upon a system of records which makes up-to-date information about each employee readily available in usable form. School personnel administration has become too complex to be handled in an incidental manner on the basis of common understanding, which far too often turns out to be a basis of misunderstanding, even in the smallest school district. The importance of factual information and a well-documented history of employment can scarcely be overestimated. A good usable system of

staff personnel records which provides pertinent information about every employee for whom the county superintendent is responsible is an essential part of the working equipment of his office.

PERSONNEL RECORD FORMS

A simple answer to the question of what is involved in an adequate system of staff personnel records for the county superintendent's office cannot be given. There is an individuality about a record system which reflects the type of administrative organization, functions performed, relationship between the county superintendent's office and local school boards, size of school system, number of professional and clerical workers employed, and the underlying philosophy of school administration. In each instance, the system of records should be developed in terms of need and use.

The basic staff personnel records used in a well-organized county-unit type of organization includes:

1. An individual teacher's folder.
2. An individual teacher's experience record.
3. An identification card file.
4. A sick-leave record.
5. Provisions in the business office for keeping teachers and other employees of the school system currently informed about contributions to retirement funds and income tax deductions withheld from salary payments.

INDIVIDUAL TEACHER'S FOLDER

The individual teacher's folder is a means of bringing together in one place all essential information concerning personal background, professional preparation, and teaching experience. In many respects, it is like a pupil's permanent cumulative record folder. In appropriate spaces provided on the folder, such information is noted as age, sex, place of birth, marital status, health data, physical defects if any, place and dates of high school graduation, a descriptive statement of undergraduate and graduate college work, degrees held, data of initial employment in the school system, previous experience with verification,

experience in present position, and a history of summer school and extension work done for the purpose of professional improvement.

The folder itself serves as a unit file for each teacher. In a typical folder, these are filed: the application form filled in by the teacher at the time of initial employment together with accompanying letters of recommendation, the teacher's contract, certificate, annual efficiency ratings, and a variety of informal memoranda including letters, clippings, and reports related to her professional work in the school and her community leadership activities. Each folder is flagged with a colored tab indicating at a glance the date when certificates must be renewed. A series of flags of different colors identifies the degrees held by teachers. This folder is the source of information when problems arise concerning placement, promotion, and the assignment of responsibility. Since it is a cumbersome record because of its all-inclusive nature, data that are needed frequently for administrative purposes are often transferred to small cards in visible files that can be used more easily.

INDIVIDUAL TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE RECORD

The individual teacher's experience record is a visible file of work cards on which the experience, both in and out of the school system, of each teacher, the degree she holds, her base salary, present salary, salary increment provided for in the adopted schedule, and proposed salary for the next year are indicated on a yearly basis for a period covering several years. In Arlington County, Virginia, where a file of this type is used, teaching experience and the degree held are factors which have been weighed heavily in forming the salary schedule. Consequently, this information must be available in usable form for budgetary planning.

At the time this record system was studied by the writer, which was two months prior to the end of the school year, colored flags on a number of cards indicated teachers who would not be returning the next year. This was a device for noting vacancies to be filled. Another series of colored flags indicated principals, supervisors, coaches, and other types of positions which received special consideration in budgetary allocations for payment of salaries. A third series of flags showed

the college degrees held by each professional employee. With these cards arranged in a flat visible file, the information for nearly 1000 employees was available for use almost instantaneously.

IDENTIFICATION CARD FILE

The identification card file is nothing more than a file of three-by-five-inch cards on which are listed the name, address, telephone number, and position of each employee in the school system, filed in alphabetic order in a small metal box. It is kept on a secretary's desk near the telephone for use in quickly locating any employee about whom inquiry is made.

SICK-LEAVE RECORD

Under the operating policy of the Arlington County system, every person employed on a ten-month basis is allowed ten days of sick leave the first year without loss of pay. Each succeeding year, the employee is allowed five days of sick leave, accumulative up to thirty days. Persons employed on a twelve-month basis are allowed fifteen days for personal illness or quarantine the first year of employment, with seven additional days allowed annually, accumulative up to forty-five days.

At the end of each month, the principals of the schools report to the central business office on sick leave for each employee, so that information is kept up to date. These reports include the name of the person taking sick leave, the date the leave was taken, the name of the substitute employed, and the reason for taking sick leave, which may be any of the following four: personal illness, illness in the employee's immediate family, death in the employee's immediate family, or pregnancy.

RECORDS OF PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Records of payroll deductions for retirement funds, income tax, social security, and other purposes provided for by law and school board policy are usually kept in the business office. This is essentially a matter of financial accounting which reports to the employee on each pay period the status of his personal account with the board of education.

The report of the employee's payroll earnings and deductions is usually made by a voucher-form stub attached to the check or warrant issued to the employee by the school board at regular pay periods. The items on the check stub correspond to the items carried on the employee's individual payroll record.

In addition to the personal information recorded at the top of the individual payroll record form for identification and classification purposes, it shows, in the entries made each payroll period, the account number, time worked, rate of pay, total pay, earnings pickup, earnings to date, and an itemized statement of deductions. A carbon attached to the stub of the check form permits entries to be made in a single operation on the office record and the check stub by typewriter or bookkeeping machine.

Large school systems find it economical to use bookkeeping machines to handle payrolls. In small offices where such equipment is not used, the same information is needed and can be carried by typewritten entries.

FILING SYSTEM

The time and energy of professional and clerical workers consumed in compiling and recording essential information constitutes by far the largest part of the investment in the system of personnel records. Expenditure for forms and filing equipment is but a minor item in the total cost, but it is a most important item. These are the implements which, if carefully planned and wisely selected, conserve the time of employees and facilitate use of the records. If ill adapted to the school system through poor planning and inadequate mechanical equipment, cost, in terms of time and energy of valuable employees consumed, may easily become too great a burden for the schools to carry and the record system falls into disuse and obsolescence from its own clumsy weight. Hence, the point for consideration of economy in establishing, developing, and using a system of personnel records is in the initial stages when forms are being planned and equipment is being selected.

The procedure most commonly followed in planning a system of records is for a representative committee of teachers and other school employees who are thoroughly familiar with the organization and

operation of the school system and the needs for a record system to work with a consultant who is acquainted with various types of forms and filing equipment. Such a committee brings together the viewpoints of the practitioners who will use the record system as a working implement from day to day, much after the fashion that the housewife uses the appliances in her kitchen, and a specialist who is in a position to recommend or supply the equipment needed for each function to be performed.

EQUIPMENT

"From a mechanical standpoint, there are two basic ways in which school records may be filed; namely, blind or vertical filing and visible filing."⁸

Drawer-type file cabinets such as are commonly used for filing correspondence are suitable for filing folder-type records. The specifications for this equipment should provide for adequate insulation so that records will be preserved in case of fire. Personnel records are confidential, and as a protection for employees each filing cabinet should be equipped with a good-quality lock.

Visible-type filing has the advantage of making an entire body of records in a particular classification visible and accessible almost instantaneously. It is particularly well adapted to files of information involving a large number of persons that must be used often by clerical and professional workers. Many school systems use this type of filing for cumulative records, attendance records, health and guidance records, and experience records for professional personnel.

Visible-filing equipment is available to meet almost every need and situation. It ranges all the way from simple panels or books equipped with a series of pockets in which individual record cards can be inserted to batteries of flat drawer files and large rotating files which make several thousand records visible and accessible almost with a turn of the hand. Desk-type rotary files suitable for handling the personnel records of employees in small school systems can be purchased at a cost as low as \$50.

⁸ Fowlkes, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

PRINCIPLES FOR A SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL RECORDS

Along with the many changes in the nature and functions of the county superintendency that are now taking place are the changes that must be made in office equipment. New jobs and added responsibilities require new tools and improvement in old ones. With increasing emphasis placed on individual attention at both the instructional level and the employment level, the system of personnel records becomes more and more essential to sound school administration and the exercise of effective educational leadership. The superintendent is responsible for taking the initiative in developing a system of record forms and working procedures that is in harmony with the purposes and organization of the schools for which he is responsible and that will serve as effective working instruments in meeting the needs of all persons concerned. In exercising this leadership, he will do well to be guided by the following general principles:

1. The record system is a working implement. Its value depends on the extent to which it is used and the purposes for which it is used. Only data which are useful should be recorded. Piling up information about children or employees which has no use makes the record system heavy and clumsy and is a needless waste of time, energy, and space needed for other purposes.
2. The record system should be adapted to the purposes, organization, and working procedures of the school system, and to the legal framework within which the school operates. Best results are likely to be obtained when employees who compile the essential information and use the records develop the forms and select the equipment under the guidance of a well-informed consultant.
3. The greatest opportunity for economy is in conserving the time of employees consumed in compiling and using the record system. Every effort should be made to select equipment that will simplify working procedures and facilitate the use of information.
4. Duplication of records is expensive and should be avoided wherever possible.
5. Personnel records are becoming increasingly important to pupils and to employees as historical references that follow them throughout their lives. If original copies are lost, there is little opportunity for duplicat-

- ing them. The school has a responsibility for preserving these records in form available for use long after the pupil's school experience has ended and the employee has ceased to work for the school district.
6. The system of personnel records should provide for a continuous, unbroken historical account of the pupil's or employee's experience with the school system from the time it begins to the time of termination. In the case of pupils, this historical record should begin at birth when they are recognized by the school census, and should continue until they are legally dropped from the census rolls or the follow-up services provided for by the purposes and policy of the school.
 7. Personnel records of pupils and employees are confidential. Organization and working procedures should provide for their protection and use in the spirit of sacred respect for the individual personality.
 8. Personnel records can be no better than the accuracy and authenticity of the information that is compiled. Working procedures should be established which will permit and encourage careful observation and accurate recording.

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CHAPTER XVI

School Business Management

In 1952 there were approximately 80,000 local units of school administration in the United States. In about 12,000 local districts administrators were employed who worked directly with boards of education as executive officers. On these administrators, responsibility for managing school money was placed in varying degrees as determined by state law, school board policy, and prevailing custom.

The school boards in about 68,000 small districts had no administrators, employed locally, to advise them on financial problems and to assume responsibility for planning and administering the school budget. In the absence of such assistance, board members performed these functions as best they could without professional help or turned to the superintendent of the intermediate district, usually comprised of an entire county, for assistance.

According to data compiled by Dawson, there were 2461 intermediate districts in 1949 and, consequently, the same number of intermediate district superintendents.¹ Most of the 68,000 local units that employed no administrative officers were in these intermediate districts and looked to the county superintendent of their respective counties for counsel and advice on school financial problems. The discussion in this chapter is devoted to consideration of the problems, principles, and practices of intermediate district superintendents in working with these local autonomous boards in school financial administration.

¹ Howard A. Dawson, "Trends in School District Reorganization," *The Phi Delta Kappan*, March, 1951, p. 305.

In a great majority of the intermediate districts of school administration, the superintendent's most important contribution to financial administration is through the assistance, advice, and guidance he gives to the local district boards which are primarily responsible for fiscal policy and practice in their respective districts. In many counties, well over fifty different budgets are planned and administered each year by boards of education in small districts, and it is not unusual to find counties in which well over one hundred separate and distinct school budgets are operated each year.

NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

Local school board members are conscientious, public-spirited men and women who sincerely want to make a worth-while contribution to their communities and to the education of the community's children, but most of their background of experience has contributed little to their understanding of the complex problems and details of managing school finance. Many of them need, and must have, assistance with the simple mechanics of preparing the budget, identifying sources of income, and classifying and accounting for expenditures. It is scarcely too much to say that all boards of education in small districts need professional assistance in long-range financial planning as it is related to the broad purposes of the educational program.

In an analysis of budgetary practices made as a part of the school finance study sponsored by the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, Simpson and Lake point out that good budget practices are more prevalent in urban centers than in rural districts because auditing procedures are better established in the larger population centers.² Lack of personnel with special competencies for the administration of public finance and the tendency for local boards of education to limit the number and salaries of administrative personnel are the factors that contribute much to poor budgetary practices in small districts.

Time and time again it has been pointed out that one of the great

² Alfred D. Simpson and Ernest G. Lake, "The Budgetary Process," *Problems and Issues in Public School Finance*, the National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1952, p. 347.

strengths of American public education lies in the scheme of decentralized initiative and control which has characterized its organization and administration from the beginning. But in this element of strength, there are difficult obstacles to be overcome, particularly in the administration of school finance, if a fair and reasonable proportion of local community, state, and federal resources are to be used effectively and efficiently for educational purposes. Mort and Reusser have forcefully called some of these obstacles to attention, not as unsurmountable difficulties, but as problems inherent in the prevailing concept of organization and control of public education which can and should be met through improved administrative procedures.

"Members of boards of education, tax collectors, treasurers, and other officials in the tens of thousands of administrative units in the 48 states are charged with various responsibilities in the collection, safe-keeping, and disbursement of the school money. Many of these administrative units are entirely too small to provide competent personnel and to ensure efficient business methods. Accounting is frequently inadequate, budgeting may be unknown, internal checks on those keeping books and those disbursing money leave much to be desired, and the reports of receipts and expenditures are often vague and misleading."¹

As a further complication to the problem of school financial administration in small districts, most school board members are elected by popular vote. Their term of office is relatively short. By the time they are becoming reasonably familiar with financial policy and budgetary procedures, they go out of office and the process of learning begins all over again with the persons who have replaced them.

Year by year, the responsibility for providing financial leadership for local school districts becomes increasingly difficult and complex. The practice of delegating responsibility for management of the school money to a representative body of lay citizens began when the administration of school finance was relatively simple. The principle of equalization was unknown and the nightmare of changes in distribu-

¹ By permission from *Public School Finance*, by Paul R. Mort and Walter C. Reusser. Copyright, 1941. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, p. 119.

tion formulae had not yet been experienced. Financial aids from outside the district were of but little consequence. There were no school lunch funds, transportation funds, and federal vocational funds to be procured, administered, and accounted for. Teacher-pupil ratio was a matter of local determination and minimum salary schedules did not have to be fitted into the school budget.

Increasing enrollments, lengthening of the school term, and broadening of the curriculum have led to larger budgets and to the need for more careful planning and accounting for school expenditures. Larger school districts have endeavored to meet this need through the employment of well-qualified administrators, business managers, purchasing agents, and specialized clerical assistants. Smaller districts that lack the resources necessary to employ such personnel have been faced with the alternatives of reorganization into larger administrative units or securing services from the intermediate district level. In sparsely settled rural areas, both approaches have been used with good results. Reorganization of small districts into larger units has brought about vast improvement in the administration of school finance. At the same time, stronger leadership in county superintendents' offices has provided local school officials with consultative and business services, resulting in better management of school funds.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY

The provisions commonly found in state school law which set forth the county superintendent's responsibility for the management of school money fall into two general classes. First, there are the provisions establishing his responsibility as an arm of the state government—as a law-enforcing agent—as an intermediary between the state department of public instruction and the local districts. The following excerpts from the Iowa school law illustrate this function.

The county superintendent shall:

Report annually to the superintendent of public instruction, at times designated by the latter, giving a full abstract of the several reports made to him by the secretaries and treasurers of the school boards. . . .

Serve, under the direction of the superintendent of public instruction, as a means of communication between the department of public instruction and the various school officers and teachers in the county.⁴

A second class of general provisions commonly found in school laws tends to remove the cloak of official authority from the county superintendent and place him in the position of a consultant and assistant to boards of education. Such provisions emphasize service, planning, coöperation, and leadership. The following examples are illustrative:

The county superintendent shall:

Assist all district boards upon request, in making budgets, certifying tax levies, and maintaining uniform accounting procedures.

Advise and counsel local boards of education concerning their immediate problems and the general development of a long-term plan of education.⁵

PRACTICAL PROBLEMS

The rural school board's need for assistance in managing the financial affairs of small school districts and its dependence on the county superintendent for counsel and guidance can be seen with most clarity by observing the number, diversity, and seriousness of individual problems brought to the county superintendent's office during periods just prior to the dates set for filing budget estimates, certifying levy orders, or submitting annual financial reports.

It is eight o'clock on a typical Saturday morning in early May and the county superintendent is just reaching his office. In the corridor of the courthouse, just outside his office door, a half-dozen school board members are impatiently waiting. In their hands are printed budget estimate forms, mimeographed pages of instruction, and scraps of paper on which have been jotted down bank balances and assessments. Each hopes to see the county superintendent first because the deadline for filing budget estimates with the county auditor has slipped up on them again.

⁴ State of Iowa, *School Laws of Iowa*, 1948, State Department of Public Instruction, Des Moines, Chapter 147, Section 18, pp. 145-146.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Chapter 147, Section 18, pp. 145-146.

The county superintendent greets them cordially but briefly and hurries on into his office, for he knows the urgency of their problems and wants to get down to the business of helping them as soon as possible.

One after another, all morning and until late in the afternoon, school board members sit down at the table with him to get help and advice in preparing the budgets estimates for their school districts. Following are examples of specific questions that disturb them:

1. How much should be budgeted for teacher retirement? Where should the item be carried in the budget?
2. Could an unencumbered balance in a capital outlay fund be transferred to current expenses?
3. How can the district's share in the state equalization fund be computed?
4. Is there any state aid available for educating homebound children?
5. How much should be budgeted for teachers' salaries?
6. Are transportation costs included in the tuition charges made by the high school district?
7. Under what budgetary classification should items for insurance be carried?
8. What levy rate will it take to raise \$10,000 on an \$850,000 valuation?
9. How should funds be budgeted to meet the cost of sick leave for teachers?
10. How can a balance needed to begin operations in the new fiscal year be provided?
11. Should the school treasurer be bonded?
12. Is it necessary to budget funds for a school audit?

These questions are familiar to the county superintendent. Dealing with them and with the problems and issues related to them is his job. But to the housewives, farmers, carpenters, laborers, and businessmen who constitute the membership on rural school boards they are new and perplexing.

Situations comparable in many respects to the one just described can be found in hundreds of rural counties. They suggest the pressing needs of rural district board members for assistance in dealing with problems that theoretically should not be the responsibility of lay

boards but, nevertheless, are and must be met in some fashion until improved administrative machinery can be developed and accepted.

At the same time these situations call attention to a very unsatisfactory method of dealing with an important educational problem. These individual conferences, far too often, take place under conditions of haste and emergency. There is little opportunity for long-range planning. Action must be taken immediately and many of the questions that must be dealt with are of a technical and mechanical nature. At best, this is a kind of first-aid treatment that fails to reach the roots of the difficulty, and furthermore, the conferences are time-consuming. In a questionnaire study made by the American Association of School Administrators, involving 1525 rural superintendents, approximately one-third of whom were superintendents of county intermediate districts, it was found that the typical rural superintendent spent 18.1 percent of his time in financial administration.⁶

BASIC PRINCIPLES

The deep-seated and jealously guarded concept of local control predominant in the thinking of rural people is the fundamental basis upon which effective leadership in planning and managing the financial affairs of small school districts must be developed. The legal framework which identifies and establishes education as a state function is more often than not pushed into the background of common understanding and beliefs. Education is regarded as the responsibility and the business of the people in local neighborhoods and communities, and they view with apprehension developments which threaten to wrest control away from them. Effective leadership must be psychological as well as logical and reasonable. The most profound array of facts that can be assembled will be of but little consequence until they are accepted, put into practice, and become part of the background of traditions and beliefs which guide people in making decisions and taking action.

Mindful of these common beliefs, county superintendents with long-

⁶ American Association of School Administrators, *The American School Superintendency*, Thirtieth Yearbook, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1952, pp. 324-325.

range objectives in view have quietly but effectively worked within the existing conceptual framework, helping people raise their educational sights and improve conditions through their own decisions and actions. By these methods, better educational advantages have been brought to young children, youth, and adults in rural neighborhoods and communities through better educational planning and management of school funds.

A PLANNING MEETING

Workshops, institutes, and conferences for school board members organized by county superintendents in many parts of the country have contributed much to the improvement of financial administration in rural school districts. The following report from DeKalb County, Illinois, illustrates the character and purpose of a school board's institute.

Each year in June or July, the board members and treasurers of each township and community come together in an evaluation and planning meeting. In this meeting, board members, together with the county superintendent, discuss educational problems in general, compile and check data on which state aid claims are based, plan budgets for the new school year, and even prepare levy order forms. These meetings are characterized by an atmosphere of learning and doing. The usual 100 percent attendance indicates that board members like them. They save time for the superintendent and board members alike in handling routine matters and minor details. Sharing ideas through discussion strengthens planning, and actual demonstrations and exhibits have improved accounting and reporting procedures.⁷

A LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS' ASSOCIATION FUNCTIONS

In Morris County, New Jersey, the County School Boards' Association, comprised of the board members from the thirty-seven districts in the county, had for several years been holding annual meetings which were predominantly social in nature. The program for these

⁷ Reported by Marjorie B. Leinauer, County Superintendent of Schools, Sycamore, Illinois, 1949 (typewritten).

meetings usually consisted of a brief period for business matters and an after-dinner speaker.

Several board members felt these meetings could provide an opportunity to study seriously the complex problems of administration, finance, and changing curriculum with which they were confronted.

A committee of board members, representing different types of school districts in the county, was appointed by the chairman. From a survey of the interests of board members, the committee arranged a program for a county board institute. In this program, through discussion groups, addresses, and special consultative services, attention was given to school finance, new building programs, pupil transportation, personnel administration, custodial service, and building maintenance.⁸

A COUNTY STUDY COMMITTEE

In Somerset County, New Jersey, a countywide study committee comprised of laymen was organized with the initiative and leadership of the county superintendent. Under the direction of this committee, studies were made that dealt with teachers' salaries, financial ability of each district to support education, school housing needs, and curriculum. Copies of the reports of these studies were sent by the committee to each board member in the county. As a result, most boards increased teachers' salaries, improved salary schedules, and began to work on their school building problems.⁹

SPECIFIC PRACTICES

These general approaches to improving the overall function of financial planning have proved their value again and again. But there frequently is need for leadership practices directed to more specific aspects of financial administration. Among the many practices which have been used with marked success and reported by superintendents are the following:

⁸ Reported by W. H. Mason, County Superintendent of Schools, Morristown, New Jersey, 1949 (typewritten).

⁹ Reported by Sampson G. Smith, County Superintendent of Schools, Somerville, New Jersey, 1949 (typewritten).

1. Preparing detailed reports on sources and amounts of revenue and the distribution of expenditures.
2. Holding public meetings on budgetary proposals.
3. Centralized purchasing of school supplies and equipment.
4. Providing for a systematic accounting and audit of special school funds.
5. Study of insurance coverage and cost.
6. Developing policy for receiving bids and awarding contracts for repairs and new construction.
7. Study of assessment and tax collection procedures.
8. Developing methods of storing supplies and keeping inventories.
9. Working out arrangements for the purchase of gasoline, oil, tires, and bus repair parts at wholesale prices.
10. Identifying all sources of local school revenue.¹⁰

PLANNING

The function of financial administration, which offers the county superintendent most opportunity for exercising effective leadership and claims his attention most frequently, is planning. Management of school money begins with the formulation of policy that prescribes the broad limits within which the educational program will operate. It is in the planning stage that decisions are made which determine whether the curriculum will be a bare skeleton that merely meets the minimum requirements established by state law or rich and meaty with opportunities that challenge a wide range of interests and aptitudes; whether the district will have topnotch teachers or teachers whose vision, tact, and skill in working with children are characterized by mediocrity; whether buildings will be well kept, orderly, and pleasing or neglected, unsightly, and unpleasant.

About 98 percent of the cost of public elementary and secondary education is met by local and state taxes. Almost 50 percent of all school money for the nation as a whole comes from local sources. These sources are close enough to the people to be modified in a relatively short period and to reflect the people's insight into the

¹⁰ For an analysis of the effectiveness of specific practices, see American Association of School Administrators, *The American School Superintendency*, Thirtieth Yearbook, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1952, p. 172.

purposes and values of education and their desires for educational services. Essentially, people buy what they really want, whether it be automobiles, household appliances, amusement, or education.

BUDGET

The budget is an instrument for giving form, direction, and definiteness to educational planning, as well as a means of supervising and controlling expenditures. At its best, it is much more than a control sheet characterized by numerical notations showing anticipated receipts and expenditures. It is a live, vital expression of the educational desires of the people—a reflection of alternatives that have been considered, values that have been weighed, and choices that have been made.

One of the most pronounced trends in budget practices during recent years is the increasing extent to which teachers and lay citizens are participating in planning. In many school districts, the budget is no longer an instrument that is prepared by the superintendent and the board and submitted to the people for approval. Through special committees, study groups, and advisory councils, various aspects of the budget are considered and recommendations made to the board of education for formally placing budget estimates into official processing channels. This practice brings to the school board, where responsibility for initial official action is placed, the benefits of the thought and experiences of people from every segment of community life. The possibilities of developing and maintaining strong school-community relations and strengthening the educational program through this process are obvious. But as in every other democratic procedure, the premium placed on capable leadership is high. Merely bringing together the ignorance and prejudices of a hundred or of a thousand people, even though they are the best citizens in the district, cannot, by the furthest stretch of the imagination, result in anything but ignorance and prejudice. To make constructive contributions to educational planning, people must be informed—must have factual information and conceptual understanding that can be used as a basis for judgment formation in situations free from emotion and social tension. In rural areas, the task of helping people to take an intelligent and useful part in educational planning falls, in a large measure, on the county super-

intendent. This is, perhaps, his greatest challenge and his best opportunity for serving the people of the county.

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

Leadership does not have to be unusual or spectacular to be effective. An example from Jackson County, Kansas, well illustrates how a simple device for initiating study of school plant conditions led to major improvement in 80 percent of the school districts in a single year. Using copies of school-building score sheets, which had been prepared by the state department of education, the county superintendent in this rural county initiated what she called a "future plans inventory" for every school in the county. Five copies of the form were distributed to each school and a definite date was set for the inventory, which was four weeks prior to the date for the annual school meetings. On the date set for the inventory, schools were dismissed early in the afternoon and board members and parents, together with the teacher, were invited to make a complete study of buildings and grounds, checking their observations on the inventory sheet. In every district, the invitation was accepted. Each of the three board members in each district kept a copy of the inventory, the teacher kept a copy, and a copy was sent to the county superintendent's office.

The superintendent's belief that people would make needed improvements in the schools if they took a close enough look to see them as they really were proved to be well grounded. Many school boards bought needed equipment and supplies at once. At the annual school meeting four weeks later, the inventories, together with recommendations for renovations, repairs, and new construction, were presented to the voters. In only one of the seventy-eight school districts in the county was the budget proposal cut. In this instance, the people decided to close their school and to send the children to a neighboring district on a tuition basis. In other districts, buildings were painted, repairs made, new rooms added, and grounds improved. It became easier to get teachers for the rural schools in this county since the buildings have been made more functional and attractive.¹¹

¹¹ Reported by Winifred Moorhead, County Superintendent of Jackson County, Holton, Kansas, 1949 (mimeographed).

USING EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS

A preschool census in Iron County, Utah, taken in the autumn of 1947, showed that during the next five years annual increases in enrollment would range from 8 percent to 36 percent. With classrooms already crowded, something had to be done.

As a beginning point, a complete survey of present building facilities was made. All needed repairs, improvements, and additions were listed, together with suggestions for more effective plant utilization that could be secured through changes in organization and attendance areas. This survey, followed by a study of population trends, indicated that three 13-room neighborhood elementary schools should be built.

This was a big undertaking in this sparsely settled county. The board of education realized that it could be accomplished only through united district support. Before asking the people for a decision, such additional information as construction cost estimates, financial status of the district, and sources of school revenue was secured.

With this information organized so it could be clearly understood, meetings were arranged with groups of teachers, the parent-teacher association, the chamber of commerce, the city council, the city planning commission, the coordinating council, several women's clubs, and the various service clubs in the school district. These were followed by a large general public meeting, at which resolutions were proposed and adopted complimenting the board of education and county superintendent for the careful study that had been made of the problem and giving them a vote of public confidence. This confidence was again expressed in a more eloquent manner a few weeks later when nine out of every ten persons voting in the special school bond election voted in favor of the issue.¹²

There is nothing unusual or spectacular in the above illustration. Superintendents, board members, and lay leaders have long known that the chances for an affirmative vote on proposals for special tax levies are much better when people have access to factual information which enables them to clearly understand the issues on which they

¹² Reported by Faye Dix, Director of the Iron County Coordinating Council, Cedar City, Utah, 1949 (typewritten).

are asked to make decisions. The example is cited in considerable detail to show how existing factual information can be gathered in a large county district, in which a major part of the population is centered in the county-seat town, and disseminated to good advantage through existing neighborhood and community organizations.

A FIRM STAND ON PRINCIPLES

There are times in the process of shaping policy governing school expenditures when it becomes necessary for the county superintendent to take a positive and definite stand on principle or professional standards in opposition to popular opinion. An example from Cheyenne County, Kansas, well illustrates such a situation.

When Sylvia Daniels became county superintendent of Cheyenne County in 1943, her first move was to notify every rural school board that no special emergency certificates would be issued with her name signed to them. This was at a time when teachers for rural schools were scarce and hard to get. Superintendents in many counties were issuing special teaching permits to meet the emergency. Almost anyone could get a position as a rural teacher if the approval of the county superintendent could be secured.

Superintendent Daniels believed that certification standards for rural teachers prescribed by the state department of education were low enough and that regularly qualified teachers could be secured if school boards made salaries and teaching conditions attractive enough. She stuck to her guns, in the face of severe criticism from many quarters, and won. The people in the county indicated their respect for such leadership by electing her to office again three years later by a write-in campaign when she was not an announced candidate for the office.¹³

BUSINESS SERVICES

In addition to budgetary planning and the formation of fiscal policy, local school boards are responsible for such business activities as the actual management of income and expenditures, processing payrolls, insurance of property and persons, purchasing and management of

¹³ H. W. Hoover, "The Daniels Way," *Kansas Teacher*, May, 1947, p. 22.

supplies, securing and recording titles to real estate, handling long-term and short-term loans, awarding contracts for construction of new plants and for supplying equipment, administering pupil transportation programs, handling receipts and expenditures for school cafeterias, managing athletic programs, accounting for student activity funds, and auditing. In many communities the volume of school business exceeds that of any other single enterprise in the community. It has reached such proportions that procedures and transactions are carefully scrutinized not only by keen-minded, observing persons, most of whom are sincerely interested in seeing that full value is received for every dollar of school money expended, but by others who are merely seeking for some pretext on which to advance argument for reducing school expenditures or looking for opportunities for personal profit from sharing in the school's business.

Even in small school districts, the business activities of the school are complex. Errors made through lack of information or the exercise of poor judgment can have serious negative effects on the educational program. To reduce the chances for such error and to assist in getting full value for each dollar of school money expended, some large county intermediate districts are now developing programs of business services. Since business management is a responsibility of the local administrative units, these services are largely of an advisory nature. Standards of quality that serve as guides in purchasing supplies and equipment are developed and made available to local boards; procedures for handling payrolls, vouchers, and contractual arrangements are recommended; and suggestions for securing short-term loans, handling insurance, and auditing are made. In some instances, coöperative purchasing agreements have been developed which have resulted in substantial savings through large-quantity purchases.

A COUNTY PROGRAM

One of the outstanding examples of a program of business field services is in San Diego County, California. This program of services was developed upon the basis of formal recommendations made by the county association of school administrators. Two full-time staff members are employed on the county superintendent's central office staff

to provide services to the sixty-six local school districts in the county. Business services provided include educational audits and appraisal of school district records, budget and financial counseling, preparing and reviewing applications for sharing in various types of state and federal appropriations for educational purposes, counsel on school district election procedures, advice in planning pupil transportation programs, and aid in purchasing school supplies and equipment.

Educational audits and appraisals are made only when requested by local districts. The educational audit is a detailed review and check of the various funds and accounts of the school district. The educational appraisal is concerned with an evaluation of business procedures, methods, and practices.

A budget check list prepared for use during budget conferences with local district boards and administrators has proved to be a useful implement for budget planning. It has been particularly helpful in making constructive recommendations related to the different funds and accounts in a budget for a comprehensive educational program.

Among the problems business-service officials in San Diego County discuss most frequently with local school administrators and boards of education are procurement of school sites, local tax rates, property appraisals, bond issues, temporary loans, fidelity bonds, and investment of surpluses.¹⁴

INSURANCE

It is almost a universal practice for local boards of education to purchase fire insurance to protect the school plants and equipment for which they are responsible. But in many instances, this is done in a haphazard manner with policies distributed among local insurance agents rather than on the basis of careful appraisal and sound business practices. A study of the fire protection insurance purchased by local boards of education in New York State revealed that many plants were overinsured, resulting in the payment of excess premiums, while in other districts school plants were grossly underinsured and the

¹⁴ San Diego County Schools, *Business Services*, Educational Monograph No. 23, the Schools, San Diego, April, 1950, pp. 7-11.

schools in danger of financial disaster if substantial loss occurred. Furthermore, both boards and insurance agents were negligent in making appropriate deductions for the value of uninsurable portions of buildings or in promptly giving districts the benefit of downward adjustments in insurance rates. Boards of education seldom computed depreciation or appreciation and often failed to take advantage of the lower rates provided by long-term blanket policies.¹⁵

The whole purpose of property insurance is to enable the district to make replacement in case of loss. Consequently, the first step in planning the insurance program is to determine replacement value. This is an important technical service which should be provided by a well-recognized appraisal company; a reputable contractor, architect, or engineer; or a specialized educational consultant working with members of the school staff. Once values have been determined, it is most important that inventories of insured property be kept up to date at all times.

Selecting the most advantageous insurance plan is another decision the local board makes which calls for the services of a consultant who is thoroughly familiar with insurance business practices. Insurance rates are usually based on a one-year term with reductions offered for longer terms. On a three-year policy, there frequently is a reduction of one-half year's premium, and a five-year policy can be secured for payment of an amount equal to four annual premiums.

Many districts find it advantageous to purchase insurance under a coinsurance plan which covers a certain percentage (usually 80 percent or 90 percent) of the replacement cost of buildings and equipment. Where more than one plant is covered in a coinsurance plan, a complete listing of all property insured should be attached to each policy.¹⁶ An insurance program, whether it be based on the reduced rates of a coinsurance plan or on the higher flat-rate plan, should be arranged on a five-year plan so that approximately one-fifth of the premiums fall due each year.

¹⁵ Julian E. Butterworth, *Improving Educational Opportunities in Rural Areas*, University of the State of New York, State Education Department, Albany, August, 1946, Bulletin 1322, p. 85.

¹⁶ George A. Eichler, "Planning an Insurance Program," *The American School Board Journal*, May, 1949, pp. 39-40.

PURCHASING

The person or persons responsible for purchasing the equipment, materials, and supplies essential to the operation of an educational program needs to know:

Where he can secure what is needed

The quantities needed

The quality he must have

The price that should be paid.¹⁷

In a large school system, a purchasing department backed by statistical studies of quality, and guided by carefully drawn specifications covering items all the way from pencil sharpeners and paper towels to heating equipment and classroom furniture, is able to meet equipment and supply salesmen on equal terms. They know prices, products, and quantity desired. With them, purchasing is a matter of negotiating the most favorable terms for the school district.

Responsibility for purchasing in small school districts is usually delegated to a superintendent who is at the same time director of personnel, curriculum, school business, and buildings and grounds. In many smaller districts, this responsibility is assumed by board members who have even less knowledge about when, what, and how to purchase. All they know about soaps, disinfectants, and floor waxes is what they read on container labels. For the most part, they are ignorant of quality as well as the quantity needed.

Keeping in touch with market conditions that reflect new developments and change in prices, developing standards of quality and specifications for the many items used by the school, and working out sound purchasing techniques are services that can be provided to much advantage by the county superintendent's office. Methods of checking, storing, and keeping inventories can be developed coöperatively by the school districts in the county, and substantial savings can be made by a system of centralized purchasing.

Pressures exerted on small school districts to buy locally is, in many

¹⁷ G. H. Reinier, "Modern Purchasing," *The Association of School Business Officials, Proceedings of the Thirty-sixth Convention*, Office of the Secretary, Kalamazoo, 1950, p. 390.

instances, a difficult problem to meet. The filling station operator who wants to sell gasoline, oil, and tires for the bus fleet; the hardware merchant who handles paints, floor wax, and roof coating; the grocer who is keenly aware of the sales opportunities in the school cafeteria; and the dry-goods-store manager who generously proposes to furnish uniforms for the school band at a small margin of profit invariably convey the idea to the small-district superintendent and board of education that schools are supported locally and that it is a matter of good public relations to keep the school's business at home. Such pressure, even though mild, places the superintendent and board of education in a difficult position. To deal with local merchants in a professional, impersonal manner, specifications and purchasing techniques need to be well developed, clearly stated, and consistently followed. In many instances, there may be decided advantages in buying locally as compared with buying from school supply firms in larger population centers. But the decision on where to buy and from whom to buy should be made on a business basis that reflects the educational opportunities of children and sound policy for expenditures of public funds rather than on the basis of personal friendships and local community pride. School business is big business that must be conducted in a businesslike manner.

FINANCIAL LOSSES

Failure to identify all the sources from which school revenue may be derived and to collect all money due to the school is a frequent cause for financial loss to small school districts. Through oversight and inadequate planning, local boards frequently fail to bring to the people in their districts full benefits that can be derived from special appropriations for vocational education, school lunch programs, library supervision, and education of handicapped children. In many states, provisions are made in the law for the schools to share in receipts from the sale of timber on state and federally owned forest lands, rentals from publicly owned grazing lands, and proceeds from fines, parking meters, and capitation tax. The county superintendent is in a favorable position to be familiar with the sources and amount of such revenues and should take the initiative in seeing that they are fairly and equitably apportioned.

Many rural school districts have suffered substantial losses because of failure to secure proper titles to land on which school buildings have been constructed. In many instances, deeds to lands on which school buildings have been constructed have been written with the provision that when the property is no longer used for school purposes it reverts back to the original owner. In such instances, when the use of school buildings has been discontinued, the original property owners have frequently become heirs to valuable buildings that in reality belong to the school district.

In Tucker County, West Virginia, several instances were discovered, after the county unit of school administration became effective, in which school buildings had been constructed by former magisterial district boards without bothering with the formalities of securing title for the land on which they were built. Civic-minded farmers, anxious to contribute something toward the development of schools in their neighborhoods, had generously given school boards permission to construct a building on a suitable piece of land. The only record of the agreement was in minutes of board meetings which were often poorly kept.

Over the years, title to the original tract of land changed hands and the value of land sometimes increased greatly. When the newly formed county board of education attempted to verify and to substantiate titles to the school property, difficult legal controversy developed. The county superintendent's office can render a valuable service to small district boards by seeing that legal procedures are followed in the procurement of school property.

SCHOOL PLANT MAINTENANCE

In response to inquiries regarding the nature of educational improvements that have been made in newly formed rural school districts, superintendents frequently point to the repair, renovation, and restoration of former one-teacher school plants that are still in use. Furniture has been reconditioned; classrooms painted; heating plants, water supply, and toilet facilities modernized; grounds improved; and new equipment added. These are tangible things to which the superintendent can point with more definiteness and sureness than he can to more subtle curriculum changes, but the fact that such improve-

ments have been necessary is a strong indication that school plant maintenance in small rural districts falls considerably short of what is desired.

Poor school building maintenance in rural districts is not a result of willful negligence of school board members. Most of them are sincerely interested in maintaining the school plants for which they are responsible as long as possible. This unsatisfactory aspect of school business administration results from the situation under which they function. They have no well-organized plan for inspection and for taking inventories; no personnel is regularly employed to whom responsibility for maintenance can be delegated; they are not well informed about safety devices, health facilities, and modern instructional equipment; they have little opportunity to understand the value of a pleasing aesthetic appearance to pupil and teacher morale; they do not plan a regular yearly maintenance program with suitable appropriations provided in each budget. Consequently, maintenance, more often than not, takes the form of meeting emergencies such as exist when a section of the roof blows off, a door is torn off the hinges, or the pump fails to work. Repairs made at such inopportune times are expensive and contribute but little to maintaining the attractiveness and usefulness of the school plant.

Services from county superintendents' offices which have contributed much toward keeping small rural school plants in good functional condition are organizing and conducting custodial training schools and conferences on maintenance problems, initiating regular school plant inspection, arranging for school board members to visit other districts to observe maintenance practices and to see new types of equipment in use, making specific recommendations to school boards for repairs and for the purchase of equipment, and encouraging school boards to make provisions regularly in school budgets for maintenance purposes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

School business management is integrally and inseparably tied to the purposes and process of education. In the ongoing stream of life which reflects the understandings, desires, and activities of people, discoveries are made, issues emerge, and trends develop that profoundly influence administrative organization, plant design, curricula-

lum content, instructional equipment, teacher preparation, and business practices. Every aspect and segment of the educational program must be continuously alert to the necessity for making adaptations and adjustments to change. The whole structure of education must be kept in balance and tuned to the needs of the people it serves.

During recent years, school business management has made adaptations in practice to such developments in personnel administration as minimum salary schedules, tenure laws, retirement plans, sick leave, and social security. Governmental regulations pertaining to the use of critical and strategic materials used in bus equipment, school furniture, and plant construction have called for revisions in capital outlay plans and have, in many instances, delayed needed improvements. Opportunities for children of nursery school and kindergarten age, health education services, food services, extended high school and publicly supported junior college programs, and adult education have called for larger budgets and increased the need for unit cost accounting. In school districts where financial support has been ample, most of these services have become well-established parts of the educational program; but in a great majority of the small rural school districts, development is yet in the initial stages and financial support and fiscal control are still matters of unfinished business.

Educational services for physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially handicapped children are just beginning to receive serious consideration in administrative organization and financial planning. Special equipment and buildings are needed, large areas must be served, unit costs are high, and coöperative agreements have to be worked out between different agencies and organizations of administrative control. The meager experiences we have had in the past indicate that school people must take the initiative in developing such services if much progress is made.

Among many other current trends and developments to which school business management must make adaptations through appropriate changes in organization and practice are:

1. Larger budgets for current operating expenses.
2. Larger bonded indebtedness for school plant expansion.
3. Greater competition for the tax dollar.

4. Operating schools with an inflated tax dollar.
5. Increase in the number of specialized services shared by two or more districts.
6. Adaptation to trade union regulations pertaining to the employment of noncertified personnel.
7. Increasing emphasis on the equalization of financial support.
8. Need for finding new dependable sources of school revenue.
9. Keeping the public informed regarding the need for and uses made of school money.

The mellow informality that characterized financial planning and school business transactions in the neighborly, small school district with its many obvious limitations had values that were seldom recognized or appreciated. It was close to the interests of people. There was no question but that they knew where school money was secured and for what it was used. There was not much need for formal reporting and accounting. Everybody was familiar with school business management and an important phase of school-public relations was pretty well cared for in the process of doing.

Such informal, common understanding, gentlemen's agreement type of school business management is neither sound nor practicable when districts become larger and budgets assume greater proportions. The details are too great to be comprehended without the mechanical aids of records and accounting, and the number of people involved is too great to function on the basis of neighborly agreements.

As school business has become big business, it has been necessary for more rigid controls to be established, more safeguards to be thrown around receipts and expenditures, and more standards to be developed. Business management has become crisp and terse. Decisions are based on cold, hard facts and well-established professional principles. There is no place in good school business management for personal favors and special consideration.

There is no question but that management of school business affairs should have moved as it has toward sound business practices. It is a well-known fact that school business practices have often been severely criticized by businessmen for being too informal and loosely managed, but with the many gains that have been made through improved prac-

tices there have been some disadvantages. There has been a loss of common touch—a tendency for the typical citizen in the community to be divorced from school financial planning and business management except for a vague, indefinite understanding—a propensity toward regarding the school as an agency from which services can be secured by the payment of fees charged in the form of taxes.

It is important that these losses be recognized and provisions be made in the improving process of school business management to compensate fully for them. Lay advisory committees, citizens' school study groups, and improved annual reports are examples of efforts directed to this end. But there is yet far too little being done. This remains one of the important problems of school business management—a problem that offers great opportunity for the county superintendent to be of service to public education.

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CHAPTER XVII

Pupil Transportation

Morning and afternoon, from September to June, the yellow school bus is a familiar sight on our highways, so much so that for the average motorist it evokes little more than a quick recall of the traffic rules to be observed in passing it. Though a commonplace sight, few people would likely pause to reflect on the magnitude of the educational service it epitomizes or that the public school systems of this country are operating one of the most gigantic transportation enterprises in the world.

Pupil transportation today is big business. Its size can be gauged by the fact that it involves transporting more than 7.3 million pupils from home to school and home again, five days a week, nine months of the year. More than one pupil of every four (about 28 percent) enrolled in school are transported by school bus. To transport this 28 percent of the nation's schoolchildren and youth requires a fleet of 120,000 school buses.¹

Even the vast networks of transportation systems operated by common-carrier companies are dwarfed by comparison with the job of pupil transportation. For example, the bus companies of this country used in intercity transportation during 1950 a total of 14,900 buses, about an eighth of the number of school buses in use; these 14,900 buses were used to transport a daily average of 1 million passengers

¹ Unpublished data for the 1951-1952 school year, collected by the United States Office of Education.

in intercity travel, less than a seventh of the number of pupils transported by school bus. In the same year the daily average intercity passenger load of the nation's railroads was less than one-twelfth of the number of pupils riding school buses.²

Such comparisons, as well as references to total numbers of pupils transported, do not reveal the real significance of pupil transportation, however. Here is an educational service which is predominantly a characteristic of the rural and smaller urban school systems of this country. It has been estimated that more than 40 percent of the elementary and secondary pupils living in rural areas and places of less than 10,000 population are transported by school bus.³ For millions of pupils living in such communities the school bus is the connecting link between their homes and educational opportunities in schools which most could not otherwise attend.

Thus, pupil transportation has brought the benefits of a high school education within reach of rural youth. It has also brought better elementary school programs to grade school children. In this connection it is significant that one of the few analyses ever made on a nationwide basis of the proportions of transported pupils attending elementary and high schools showed that during the 1943-1944 school year 63 percent of the pupils transported attended elementary school and 36 percent attended high school.⁴

At the same time pupil transportation has made possible in rural areas the establishment of larger schools better capable of providing the variety and quality of educational services needed by children and youth. School consolidation and school bus transportation go hand in hand in equalizing educational opportunities. Consolidation of several small schools into a larger attendance center is in rural areas almost universally accompanied by provision of school bus transportation service. In fact, the widespread consolidation of small schools during the past two decades has been responsible in large measure for the rapid growth of pupil transportation.

² Computed from information published in National Association of Motor Bus Operation, *Bus Facts*, 20th edition, the Association, Washington, D.C., 1951, Tables 4 and 7, pp. 10-11.

³ From information compiled by E. Glenn Featherston, United States Office of Education, 1952.

⁴ E. Glenn Featherston, "Statistics on Pupil Transportation," *School Life*, May, 1947, pp. 11-12.

Much of this growth has taken place in larger school administrative districts, such as county units, where the problem of eliminating unnecessary small schools and establishing larger attendance centers has been vigorously attacked for some time. More recently, there has been highly significant progress in a number of states where many thousands of common school districts have been reorganized into larger administrative units, typically having the general characteristics of a sociological rural community, including the surrounding open country constituting the trade and service area of the village center. In a large portion of these newly established districts, and there are many of them, there has been extensive consolidation of school attendance centers with a consequent increase in pupil transportation services.

Other factors have also been influential in the growth and importance of pupil transportation. Although all states have since 1920 authorized use of school funds for pupil transportation, many have since that time enacted laws and established rules and regulations which have greatly fostered its growth. Increased financial aid to local school systems, regulations requiring transportation of all pupils living beyond a specified distance from the school, laws and regulations governing school bus standards and qualifications of drivers, have all been highly beneficial.

Moreover, the concern of local people for the health and safety of their schoolchildren can scarcely be overemphasized as a contributing factor. People recognize that it is far safer for children to ride a school bus than to walk along a busy highway. Likewise, walking long distances to school in cold and stormy weather, even in the absence of traffic hazards, is a possible hazard to health which pupil transportation ought to remove.

Thus, local people throughout the country have come to accept pupil transportation as one of the most important auxiliary services their school system provides. That they have come to place so much confidence and reliance in it has been due in great measure to the effectiveness of its administration.

ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

As with most other auxiliary services, particularly those of more recent origin, which are provided by local school systems, there is

widespread variation in the functions of county superintendents in administering pupil transportation programs. Some county superintendents, as executive officers for the county board of education, are instrumental in assisting the board to form pupil transportation policies and are directly responsible for administering the transportation program in the county. Other county superintendents have practically no responsibility at all for whatever transportation that may be provided. Between these extremes there are varying shades of differences in functions. There are at least two basic causes for these variations.

STATE POLICIES VARY

Some of this variation is caused by the marked differences among states in policies and procedures lodged at the state level. For example, in North Carolina pupil transportation is in most respects a state-operated program, while in a number of other states it is almost wholly decentralized in the local school systems. Several states pay the local districts the full cost of a minimum program of transportation as defined by the state; at the other extreme, there are eight states where no additional financial aid is allowed local districts for transportation services rendered. Several states do not specify that any pupil must be transported to school, merely indicating they may be transported under certain circumstances, leaving the matter to local boards of education to decide; other states require transportation for all pupils under specific circumstances, such as for all those living more than a mile from school. One state owns the entire fleet of approximately 6000 school buses; in Connecticut and New Mexico, at the other extreme, more than 90 percent of the buses are privately owned. Several states have no standards for school bus drivers other than possession of an ordinary driver's license; on the other hand, about a third of the states require a special school bus driver's license. Some states leave the matter of establishing bus routes entirely to the local districts; by way of contrast, in at least one state all bus routes must be approved by the transportation director in the state department of education.

Such extremes as those noted above obviously bring variations in local functions from an administrative standpoint. However, the nature of the county superintendency itself in the county intermediate

district states, as contrasted with the county-unit states, is the chief reason for the differences in the county superintendent's role in administering pupil transportation. In practically all states most functions which are not directly performed from the state level are lodged in the local districts.

INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT FUNCTIONS

As already indicated pupil transportation is primarily a function of basic school districts rather than of intermediate administrative units. In a number of the county intermediate district states the county superintendent does little more than collect transportation statistics to be included in his annual report to the state, transmit state funds for transportation to local districts, and once a year notify bus drivers when and where driver training programs operated by the state will be held in the county. In such instances, he functions almost wholly as an arm of the state. For example, the chief responsibility of Illinois county superintendents regarding pupil transportation is to check all claims made by local districts for reimbursement from state funds to determine whether the standards of service prescribed by the state have been met.⁵

A few states have assigned a considerably larger role to the county superintendent. In Wisconsin the county school district reorganization committee, on which the county superintendent serves as secretary, approves all bus routes in the county. The county superintendent is responsible for preparing maps each year showing approved bus routes, approves the transportation finance plans submitted by local districts, and each year makes a survey showing the number of pupils transported.⁶ In Iowa the county board of education, with the county superintendent serving as its executive officer, is required to (1) enforce all rules and regulations of the state department of public instruction relating to pupil transportation; (2) review and approve all transportation arrangements between districts in the county and in all districts not operating high schools; (3) approve all bus routes which

⁵ State Department of Public Instruction, *The School Code of Illinois*, the Department, Springfield, 1951, Circular Series A, No. 72.

⁶ From information supplied by Theodore Sorenson, Director of Pupil Transportation, Wisconsin State Department of Public Instruction, July, 1952.

any district proposes setting up outside its boundaries; and (4) establish transportation service in any district refusing to comply with state regulations and require the local district concerned to pay the cost of the service provided.⁷

Both Iowa and Wisconsin illustrate a broader delegation of responsibility lodged at the intermediate level than is characteristic of most states having a similar structure for the county superintendency. However, it is worthy of note that in both states the functions of county superintendents are primarily regulatory. In neither case do they operate pupil transportation programs. Although in rare instances an Iowa county superintendent might operate the program for some recalcitrant district in his county, such action would be essentially regulatory because the district concerned would be free to operate its own program any time it chose. Even though the county superintendent's functions are not operational in nature, they do represent a marked accretion of responsibility at the county level.

While most states having intermediate districts place the responsibility for operating pupil transportation programs in the local school districts, Texas recently enacted legislation authorizing county boards of school trustees to establish and operate pupil transportation programs. Specific provisions of the law require county boards to (1) requisition buses and supplies from the state; (2) prior to June 1 of each year establish, subject to state approval, all school bus routes for the succeeding year; (3) employ school bus drivers; (4) be responsible for the maintenance and operation of school buses; and (5) authorize any independent school district, on its request, to operate its own transportation program. Here is the most clear-cut example in any state of the operation of pupil transportation programs being assigned to the intermediate level. Whether the example set by Texas portends a trend in that direction only time will tell.

However, the possibilities of making the intermediate district the operating unit have been explored in at least two notable instances. In the intermediate district study conducted in New York State between 1945 and 1947, analyses were made in three proposed intermediate

⁷ Iowa State Department of Public Instruction, *School Laws of Iowa*, the Department, Des Moines, 1951, pp. 208-209.

units to determine the effect on costs if the intermediate district rather than the local units operated the program. Investigators recorded all essential data about each existing bus route, studied possibilities of rerouting to avoid duplication of service, and computed the savings that might result. It was estimated that a saving of nearly 23 percent of the total cost of the program, excluding any savings that might be made through centralized purchasing and maintenance and repair services, could be made if the proposed intermediate districts operated the programs.⁸

While economy in operational costs is by no means the only factor which should be considered, it is well known that many local school districts are too small to operate a pupil transportation program either economically or with good management. Undoubtedly, a larger administrative unit can provide better service at more reasonable cost.

In the survey of the public schools of Oregon made in 1949-1950, the survey staff found that the 1250 school buses in use in the state were being operated by about half that number of local school districts. Over 300 local districts operated only one bus and more than a hundred others operated only two buses. Only four districts in the state operated more than twenty buses and there were only seventeen additional districts operating more than ten buses. The low level of efficiency as well as the high costs involved led the survey staff to recommend that the county be made the operating unit for pupil transportation if the movement toward creating larger local administrative units was long delayed.⁹

Whatever the results of the New York State study and the recommendations made in the Oregon survey may hold for the future, at present pupil transportation programs, except in Texas, are largely the responsibility of local districts rather than intermediate units. For that reason the remainder of this chapter will be concentrated on the functions of the county superintendent in the county-unit type of organization, where the operation of the pupil transportation program

⁸ Julian E. Butterworth, "Effect of Size of District on Pupil Transportation," *Nation's Schools*, August, 1949, pp. 42-43.

⁹ Legislative Advisory Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education, *A Study of Public Elementary and Secondary Education in Oregon*, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Salem, Oregon, 1951, pp. 345 and 351.

is one of his major responsibilities. However, any of the operational functions discussed would be equally applicable to the intermediate type of situation wherever such functions might be exercised, either at present or in the years ahead.

ORGANIZING THE PROGRAM

Pupil transportation cannot function efficiently without a sound organization for its management and control. Although it is a service directly concerned with equalizing educational opportunities in the county schools, organization of the program requires sound business management policies and practices. Sound organization is but a means to ends toward which the entire school system is dedicated. For that reason it must be viewed as an integral part of the total job of administering the schools. In the final analysis the effectiveness with which the program is organized is determined by the degree to which pupil transportation contributes to the overall purposes of the school system.

THE TRANSPORTATION SUPERVISOR

In a number of county-unit school systems the county superintendent himself assumes responsibility for organizing and operating the pupil transportation program. With such programs rapidly increasing in size and requiring more and more of the superintendent's time and also requiring him to become more and more a transportation specialist, there has been a marked tendency in recent years for the county board to employ a transportation supervisor who, serving as an assistant to the superintendent, organizes and operates the program.

Some authorities believe that any school system operating twenty or more buses can afford, from the standpoint of economy and efficiency in service, to employ a transportation supervisor.¹⁰ In the survey of pupil transportation in West Virginia the survey staff recommended that a full-time supervisor should be employed in all counties operating thirty or more buses.¹¹ Certainly in larger county-unit sys-

¹⁰ D. P. Culp, *An Administrator's Handbook of Pupil Transportation*, Alabama State Department of Education, Montgomery, 1950, Bulletin No. 4, p. 59.

¹¹ Legislative Interim Committee, *A Report of a Survey of Public Education in the State of West Virginia*, State Superintendent of Free Schools, Charleston, 1945, p. 319.

tems a supervisor who has primary responsibility for operation of the program is essential if safe and adequate service is to be provided at reasonable cost.

The nature of the responsibilities of transportation supervisors would require that they have adequate backgrounds of professional training. This was clearly recognized in the Oregon and West Virginia surveys referred to earlier. The survey staff in West Virginia specifically recommended that transportation supervisors, whether full-time or part-time, should be professionally trained and experienced in the field of education and competent to develop the transportation program in terms of the basic functions of the schools.¹² More recently, there has been a growing realization that the supervisor should have a broad background of training in school administration, with specialized training and experience in pupil transportation. Certainly if the program becomes an integral part of the total job of administering the schools, the educational leadership qualities necessary extend beyond those required for handling the business and maintenance aspects of the program.

Some of the areas involving a high quality of professional leadership include the following:

1. Working with the superintendent and school board in developing policies for the transportation program.
2. Organizing the program so that it is adapted to the total school program and to the needs of pupils in the county for school bus service. In the modern transportation program this involves more than transporting pupils from home to school in the morning and home again in the afternoon. It also involves use of buses for instructional trips during the school day.
3. Working with school principals in planning bus routes and time schedules for each bus.
4. Assisting school principals and teachers in organizing and conducting safety education programs for transported pupils.
5. Developing and maintaining good relationships between principals and bus drivers, with the delegation to each principal of responsibility for supervision of the buses serving his school.
6. Working with parents, encouraging their coöperation in safety pro-

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 319-320.

grams and in keeping the transportation system responsive to the needs of their children.

7. Assisting in the selection of bus drivers.
8. Working with school bus drivers, seeing to it that each is thoroughly trained and carefully checked for driving knowledge and skills.
9. Developing, with the assistance of drivers and maintenance personnel, a thoroughgoing maintenance program.
10. Economical purchase of equipment and supplies in keeping with the particular requirements of the transportation system.
11. Maintenance of accurate records and reports to make possible accurate cost accounting.

EMPLOYMENT OF DRIVERS

The first step in securing a competent staff of school bus drivers is the development of sound methods of selecting them for employment. Errors made as the result of poorly conceived employment policies and procedures can rarely be overcome even by the best of school bus driver education programs. There is no substitute for adequate standards of selection.

Selection Standards. All states have standards of some sort which local school systems must observe in employing school bus drivers. The most universal standard is that of minimum age, which in half the states is twenty-one years. Some states specify little more except possession of an ordinary driver's license. Other states issue a special school bus driver's license which is based on satisfactory evidence of good character, of good health as determined by a medical examination, of adequate knowledge and skills required for safe driving as determined by road tests and written examinations.

Whatever the standards prescribed by the state may be, there is always wide latitude for exercise of carefully determined selection policies and procedures by the local school district. In other words, within the framework of state standards the county superintendent and the board of education are responsible for developing policies and procedures which will assure selection of capable drivers.

One of the most essential features of a sound system of selection is that no bus driver should be employed except on the recommendation of the county superintendent. This is the foundation upon which all

other selection practices must rest if they are soundly conceived and executed. Whatever other policies and procedures are established have the primary purpose of assisting the county superintendent in making sound recommendations as to applicants' fitness for employment.

One of the most comprehensive and carefully designed sets of selection standards was developed in 1948 by the National Conference on Pupil Transportation.¹³ While intended primarily as a guide for states in setting up selection standards, most of the recommendations are equally applicable to local school systems. Ten specific areas were proposed for consideration in establishing standards for selection of bus drivers: (1) minimum age, (2) character traits, (3) emotional stability, (4) physical requirements, (5) physical examination, (6) experience, (7) training, (8) knowledge requirements, (9) skill requirements, and (10) issuance of a special license. In fact, some of the recommendations apply more directly to the responsibility of county superintendents than to anyone else either at the local or state level.

Thus, in deciding on an applicant's fitness as a bus driver, it was recommended that the following character traits be considered: (1) reliability and dependability; (2) initiative, self-reliance, and leadership; (3) ability to get along with others; (4) freedom from use of undesirable language; (5) personal habits of cleanliness; (6) moral conduct above reproach; (7) honesty; (8) freedom from addiction to narcotics and habit-forming drugs; and (9) freedom from use of alcoholic beverages and liquors. Necessary traits of emotional stability include patience, considerateness, even temperament, and calmness under stress.

Admittedly, some of these character and emotional traits are difficult to evaluate objectively or always with a high degree of accuracy. Their importance, however, fully justifies efforts to get the best information available and to evaluate it with care. In getting such information, it is common practice to require an applicant to submit names of responsible persons, usually three, as references. Certainly

¹³ National Commission on Safety Education, *Standards and Training Programs for School Bus Drivers; Recommendations of the National Conference on Pupil Transportation*, the Commission, National Education Association, 1949.

the very least that should be done would include consultation by the superintendent or transportation supervisor with each reference, making inquiry about the applicant's fitness with respect to the traits enumerated above. In this, the emphasis should be to get information, not to get an evaluation from the applicant's references as to whether or not he is qualified. It is the job of professional people to weigh the information gathered in the light of standards which have been agreed upon as essential. While an intensive investigation is usually unnecessary, it is always necessary to inquire further than the references submitted by the applicant if there is any doubt whatever that full and valid information cannot be obtained from them.

Physical Examination. All drivers should be required to take a medical examination each year. The examination should be conducted by physicians designated by the board of education. Unless the state department of education provides a fully adequate medical examination form setting forth the physical requirements and conditions of health which must be met, it is highly desirable that the county superintendent take the initiative in developing such a form, utilizing the assistance of physicians designated by the school board as medical examiners.

It has been recommended that the annual physical examination include at least the following standards:¹⁴

1. Normal use of both hands, both arms, both feet, and both legs.
2. Freedom from any communicable disease.
3. Freedom from mental, nervous, organic, or functional diseases or disorders which are likely to interfere with safe driving.
4. Good eyesight, either without glasses or corrected with glasses.
5. Adequate hearing with both ears.

Another essential element in selection procedures is that of determining whether applicants have the knowledge and skill necessary for safe school bus driving. This, like the medical examination, can be determined objectively. Written examinations are commonly administered to test the driver's knowledge of state motor vehicle regula-

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

tions and traffic laws. Road tests are given to test driving skills. This test should be given by an examiner who is qualified to train school bus drivers. It should be sufficiently comprehensive to include major driving problems likely to be encountered on a school bus route.¹⁵

As a prerequisite to consideration for employment, the prospective school bus driver should be required to have an adequate background of experience in safe driving. His driving record should be entirely free of accidents which were due to his carelessness, irresponsibility, or lack of skill. Likewise, his record should be free from traffic law violations. No school system can afford to employ inexperienced drivers and certainly none could justify the hazards which might be created by employment of careless and unsafe drivers.

While the use of sound selection procedures in employing drivers does not in itself guarantee a safe pupil transportation program, it does go a long way in making such a program readily possible. It is an essential first step upon which the safety and effectiveness of the entire program very largely depend.

Minimum age requirements for school bus drivers have not been scientifically determined and state requirements vary considerably. Although about half the states have a minimum age of twenty-one years, a sizable number have set the minimum age at sixteen or seventeen years. In North Carolina more than three-fourths of the 6000 school bus drivers are high school boys and girls between sixteen and eighteen years of age. Experience in that state indicates that, with sound selection procedures and a well-developed school bus driver training program, high school pupils have achieved a record of safe driving which is better than the record of adult school bus drivers in the state. Undoubtedly, both the selection procedures and the driver training program have been very largely responsible for North Carolina's success with student drivers.

DRIVER TRAINING

No school system can afford to rest on its oars after employing safe, responsible school bus drivers of good health and character. That all

¹⁵ D. P. Culp, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

need special training for their jobs, however expert in motor vehicle operation they may be when employed, is no longer subject to question.

For a good school bus driver is more than an ordinary motor vehicle operator. Operation of a school bus weighing several tons in all kinds of weather and often over narrow, hilly, crooked, or heavily traveled roads requires, in itself, a high degree of driving knowledge and skill. In addition, loading and unloading of pupils along the highway bring safety problems rarely confronting other drivers. But a school bus driver does more than transport, load, and unload pupils, however safely. In many respects, he is also a teacher; his example and his influence help to shape the character of his passengers; he is responsible for developing and maintaining a wholesome social climate on his bus. The services he renders are an integral part of the total school program; as a member of the school system's personnel team, he has working relationships with teachers, principals, the superintendent and his staff which require him to have some understanding of the entire school system, its organization, and its administrative policies and procedures. Moreover, the nature of his work gives him frequent opportunity to become a valuable public relations agent for the school system.

The school bus driver's need for specialized preparation for his work has led a number of state departments of education, though by no means all of them, to establish training programs which are conducted locally, typically at the county level. Some of these programs are quite rudimentary in character and extent. However, a few states have developed comprehensive and well-rounded programs which reach every county. In North Carolina the Highway Safety Division of the Department of Motor Vehicles maintains a staff of seventeen safety specialists, each of whom is assigned to a particular area of the state for directing the school bus driver training program. Working in close coöperation with the county superintendent, county pupil transportation supervisor, bus mechanics, and local school principals, a well-rounded training program is carried on, including classroom instruction, supervised driving experience for new drivers, and road tests

and other follow-up work for those having previous school bus driving experience.

Whatever the amount of responsibility the state department of education takes in the training program, the county superintendent and his staff have a large role. Where the program provided from the state level is not as comprehensive and well developed as the needs of the school bus drivers require, the responsibility of the county superintendent becomes greater. Thus, the 1948 Conference on School Transportation, while recommending that the state department of education accept primary responsibility for planning training programs, also recommended that local superintendents should carry the chief responsibility for administering local programs and should provide at least part of the instruction.¹⁶

Content of Training Programs. The content of a good training program was also carefully studied in the 1948 Conference. While pointing out that training program topics should be selected on the basis of local needs, the following areas were developed to assist state and local school systems in developing well-rounded programs:

1. Understanding and appreciating the need for training.
2. State traffic laws and other rules and regulations of controlling governmental agencies governing the operation of school buses including driver's conduct following an accident; application of first aid; and legal liabilities in case of negligence.
3. Personal qualifications necessary for driving a school bus including physical, mental, and emotional characteristics; maintenance of general health; and knowledge, habits, and attitudes.
4. Personal relationships and responsibilities of the school bus driver including those to school officials, to pupils, to parents, and to other drivers and mechanics; contractual obligations; financial liabilities; and duties with respect to records and reports.
5. Operational procedures based on state and local board of education rulings including loading and unloading operations; pupil management and discipline; and problems of routes and schedules.
6. Good driving practices and skills on the open road; in limited areas

¹⁶ National Commission on Safety Education, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

such as at school or garage; in traffic; and under adverse road and weather conditions.

7. Preventive maintenance of the bus including economical driving practices; daily inspection and cleaning of bus; submitting bus to garage and to official inspection station; and extent of driver's responsibility for diagnosis and follow-up in case of trouble or breakdown.
8. Training in administering first aid. It is recommended that all school bus drivers qualify for a first aid certificate.¹⁷

Admittedly, this list of topics, though not intended as an instructional guide to be followed exactly, suggests a sizable task for busy county school administrators, even with considerable assistance from the state department of education. However, the fact that training school bus drivers is a sizable task in no way presupposes that county superintendents cannot take the lead in organizing and conducting the program, utilizing all available resources from the state department of education and other state and local service agencies that can be of help.

With respect to the amount of time that should be devoted to training activities, Culp¹⁸ recommended that the new driver should be given at least twenty clock hours of instruction, with twelve to sixteen hours devoted to classroom discussion and psychophysical tests and the remaining four to eight hours spent in supervised driving instruction. Then, on completion of the basic twenty-hour course, each driver should have at least one day's training each year in which emphasis is centered on actual school bus driving problems. Belknap,¹⁹ on the basis of his experience in the New York State Education Department, recommends a minimum of ten two-hour periods, or its equivalent, spread over a period not to exceed one month, and preferably two weeks.

A Specific Example. An example of what can be accomplished through the foresight and initiative of the county superintendent may be found in Kanawha County, West Virginia, where since 1945 the board of education has authorized extending school bus drivers' terms of employment for one week preceding the opening of school each

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

¹⁸ D. P. Culp, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

¹⁹ Burton H. Belknap, *The School Bus*, Educational Publishers, Inc., Philadelphia, 1951, pp. 113-114.

fall, with the full week devoted to in-service education and training activities. Each year the program is planned by the transportation director and chief bus mechanic of the county school system and a member of the state department of education. Patterns of instruction vary from year to year to give emphasis to observed and recorded needs. Methods include lectures by officials of the local school system and specialists from the state department of education; group discussions; individual performance tests in traffic; and psychophysical tests, including tests of visual acuity, distance judgment, night vision, field of vision, reaction time, steadiness, and glare acuity. As a result of this program the county superintendent has reported the following outcomes: (1) a reduction in the number of accidents, (2) better morale among the drivers, (3) reduced cost of operation, (4) increased number of drivers receiving National Safety Council safe driver awards, (5) less complaints by local school personnel and the general public, (6) public recognition of the bus driver and his job, (7) better pupil discipline, and (8) request of drivers for additional training.²⁰

Staff Conferences. Another aspect of the training of school bus drivers is that of group meetings and conferences, whether formal or informal, between drivers and other personnel in the school system. When matters arise that influence the school bus drivers' work, there is as much justification for bringing them together in a group meeting as there is for holding teachers' meetings under comparable circumstances. Occasional meetings to discuss changes in school policies which have been adopted, organizational and school program changes and adaptations, and similar matters help to keep drivers abreast of current developments; likewise such meetings give drivers opportunity to air their problems and to report information which the transportation supervisor and the county superintendent may need in making the transportation program more effective. Sometimes faculty meetings held in local schools deal with problems which are also of concern to bus drivers and which they could attend with profit, both for the school faculty and the drivers concerned.

²⁰ From an unpublished manuscript by Virgil L. Flinn, Superintendent, Kanawha County Schools, Charleston, West Virginia, 1951.

Certainly, it is the obligation of both the administration of the county school system and local principals to keep bus drivers informed at all times concerning policies that might influence their work in any way. There is likewise a large area of responsibility in developing and maintaining wholesome relationships between bus drivers and all administrative, supervisory, and instructional personnel in the school system. This is an essential part of any school bus driver education program and one which requires attention throughout the school year.

PROCUREMENT OF EQUIPMENT

The procedures used in selecting and purchasing school buses and equipment constitute one of the important aspects of the pupil transportation program. Many factors are involved which directly influence the effectiveness of the program, including safety factors, adequacy and economy of service, and sound business management practices.

Two major objectives are involved. The first is pupil safety, including maintenance of pupils' health while they are on the bus. The second objective is economy, including the initial cost of the bus and the costs of its operation and upkeep. Pupil safety is, of course, the primary objective; but, because of the outstanding progress made during the last decade in standardizing school bus construction, it is compatible to a very large degree with the economy objective.

Standards. The first concern of the local school administrator is the selection and purchase of school buses having construction standards which conform to these two objectives. Prior to 1939 this constituted an extremely difficult problem because construction standards adopted by the states varied so greatly that manufacturers were unable to mass-produce school buses which could be sold throughout the country, and high unit costs resulted. Moreover, there was widespread lack of agreement on many safety features required. This somewhat chaotic situation led in 1939 to the holding of a national conference on school bus standards which was attended by representatives of the forty-eight state departments of education and by engineers representing the automobile industry and school bus body manufacturers. This conference developed a set of national minimum standards and recommended their adoption by all the states. These standards were revised

in 1945 and again in 1948 by national conferences called for that purpose. At present the 1948 revised edition of minimum standards²¹ constitutes the most carefully derived and comprehensive source of information concerning desirable basic construction features of school buses. Most states have adopted these standards wholly or a major part of them, in several instances supplementing them with standards for special equipment and minor changes to compensate for special conditions within the state. While some variation from the national minimum standards is doubtless justified in some states because of climatic conditions and possibly other factors, all states have profited greatly through lower costs and better service by coming to substantial agreement with those agreed upon nationally. Such standards have no other purpose than to provide safe school buses at reasonable cost.

In most states all school buses must conform to state construction standards established either by statute or state department of education regulations. When these standards are in substantial agreement with national minimum standards, local school administrators have assurance that buses purchased conform to safety requirements as determined by transportation experts, engineers from the automotive industry, and highway safety specialists. Even where the state does not require conformance with any standards, the only sound procedure for the local school system would be to purchase buses which were constructed according to the national standards referred to above. The selection of buses according to the most reliable standards available is the essential first step.

Another essential in selection is to determine the size and quality of school buses needed. The question of pupil passenger capacity of each bus to be purchased merits careful study if waste due to unused seating space or safety hazards due to overcrowding are to be avoided. While many states have regulations concerning overloading which must be observed, overcrowding any bus with "standees" is a highly questionable practice even where it is permitted by state regulations.

The selection and purchase of a new bus, whether as an addition

²¹ National Commission on Safety Education, *Minimum Standards for School Buses*, 1948 revised edition, Recommendations of the National Conference on Pupil Transportation, the Commission, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1949.

to the fleet already being operated or as a replacement for worn-out or obsolescent equipment, should be regarded as part of a long-range program. This requires reëxamination of the utilization of buses already in use as well as making careful estimates of future needs based on pupil enrollment trends, plans for further consolidation of school attendance centers, and possible changes in rerouting of the buses to provide more efficient service. Only then can the size of new buses needed be determined with any degree of certainty.

Quality. The quality of the school bus to be purchased likewise merits careful consideration. While no school system could justify purchase of luxury-type transportation equipment when cheaper equipment which meets established standards of pupil safety and comfort as well as economy of operation is available, most school systems are confronted with a rather wide range of possible choices in quality and likewise in cost. Regardless of the quality or cost, the first consideration should be whether the bus selected meets national and state construction standards. Unless it does, the purchase of such a bus can never be justified no matter how low its initial cost.

However, buses meeting the national minimum standards in every respect vary greatly in cost, particularly in the cost of the chassis. Many school systems have found the lower-priced bus provides safe and economical service. On the other hand, some systems claim the higher-priced bus is more satisfactory and is cheaper in the long run because it is more durable. Belknap,²² a proponent of more expensive equipment, points out that in New York State certain fifty-five-pupil-capacity buses constructed on New York specifications cost \$7500 per bus, while in another state buses having the same capacity but meeting the national minimum standards cost but \$3100 each. Stating that the \$7500 bus exceeds national standards in several respects which increase its usual period of usefulness to fifteen years instead of the five or six years' service obtained from the cheaper product, he goes on to show that the more expensive bus is considerably cheaper in the long run, even after allowance for equipment items not found on the \$3100 bus.

It would be more useful if such comparisons were made within a

²² Burton H. Belknap, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-160.

state, taking into account operating conditions and maintenance practices, as well as the degree to which the cheaper bus provides safe transportation service with a desirable degree of pupil comfort. Careful studies based on the per seat cost per year for the life of buses having various levels of initial cost would give local school boards and superintendents much-needed assistance in making sound choices.

Certainly the claims of long service made by some manufacturers should be evaluated in terms of local conditions and needs. For example, a school bus designed to last a million miles undoubtedly would be a wise investment for a commercial bus company operating each of its buses a hundred thousand miles each year. But for a school system where the average annual mileage was 15,000 or less, the effects of deterioration extending over the long period of time required to exhaust a bus's usefulness would have to be considered very carefully.

Purchasing Procedures. A third consideration in procurement of school transportation equipment, including buses, is the use of sound purchasing procedures. Methods vary widely among the states. In North Carolina all public school buses are purchased directly by the state and furnished to local school systems on the basis of their needs. Texas uses the same system. In Alabama the sixty-seven county boards of education pool their orders for new buses through the state department of education and state purchasing agent to take advantage of lower prices obtained by buying in large quantities. In 1951 this procedure enabled county boards to purchase forty-eight passenger buses for about \$2700 each. These buses met national minimum standards but had few items of extra equipment; the chassis were lower-priced models and bodies were constructed by leading school bus body manufacturers.²³

Unquestionably, quantity buying of school buses, as well as other transportation equipment and supplies, can result in considerable savings. There appears to be no compelling reason why local school systems everywhere could not get more for the school tax dollar through a quantity purchasing plan involving the pooling of orders on

²³ From unpublished material prepared by D. P. Culp, Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Auburn, 1951.

a state or regional basis. Such practices, it is sometimes argued, would result in denying business to local dealers and would force the local school systems to accept a standard product of a given make even though another might be preferred. However, plans could readily be established so that local dealers could sell directly to the local school system at prices set by state bids, although they probably would make less profit under such a plan. As for the freedom of the local school system to choose any make or type of equipment desired, the savings made through coöperative purchasing could well overbalance such considerations so long as a safe, reliable product were obtained.

Regardless of whether coöperative purchasing procedures are used, detailed specifications for all transportation equipment should be prepared and included in well-advertised requests for competitive bidding. Even though permitted by state regulations, no board of education can afford to decide what a fair price for needed equipment would be and then proceed to divide the business among local dealers. Buying on competitive sealed bids, opened and examined by the school board while in executive session, is the only defensible method.

OWNERSHIP OF BUSES

In view of the emphasis given in the preceding section to procedures of local school boards in selecting and purchasing buses, it may seem out of place here to raise the question of ownership. However, the issue of privately-owned and board-owned buses is by no means a dead one. Until recent years pupil transportation was predominantly provided on a contract basis. For example, Noble²⁴ found that during the 1936-1937 school year over 60 percent of all school buses operated in forty states were privately owned. Since that time there has been a large-scale movement toward public ownership. Blose and Featherston²⁵ found that in 1949-1950 slightly over 64 percent were publicly owned. The fact that more than a third of the buses used that year were privately owned indicates that there is still lack of agreement in many areas as to which system of ownership is preferable.

²⁴ M. C. S. Noble, Jr., *Pupil Transportation in the United States*, International Textbook Company, Scranton, 1940, p. 213.

²⁵ David T. Blose and E. Glenn Featherston, *Statistics on Pupil Transportation*, U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C., 1949-1950 (mimeographed).

In this respect the burden of proof rests with those advocating private ownership. Those favoring private ownership commonly point out that this plan largely relieves school officials of responsibility for operation and management of the program, and that it enables them to make accurate estimates of costs at the beginning of each school year.

It is extremely difficult to see any validity in either of these arguments. Pupil transportation is an integral part of the modern educational program in rural areas. As such its administration requires the same careful attention to planning the program, operating it safely and efficiently, and attending to the details of sound business management that characterizes other aspects of the total school program. These are matters which are the proper concern of trained school administrators, just as much so as operation of the school lunch program or the program of health services. With respect to the second argument, there is no more reason to know ahead of time exactly to the penny how much pupil transportation service will cost for the year than for any other aspect of the school program. Sound procedures in developing the transportation budget under school ownership of the buses require accurate cost accounting of the program for previous years, an analysis of needs for the coming year, and careful estimates of the costs which will be involved. This is precisely the procedure used in budgeting for other aspects of the school program. It can be done just as accurately for pupil transportation as for operation of school plants in the county.

Moreover, school ownership of the buses has a number of highly important advantages which the contract plan does not offer. Some of the major advantages include:

1. Pupil transportation service costs less under school ownership. School districts can purchase buses just as cheaply, and almost always more cheaply under coöperative purchasing plans, as private contractors can buy their equipment and supplies. The school system does not have to make a profit on its investment to stay in business as the private contractor does. Contractors have to pay certain taxes and license fees not required of school districts. Maintenance and operational supplies can be bought much more cheaply by the local school district under sound purchasing procedures. Operating personnel can be employed fully as

economically by the school district. Through pooling of vehicles, insurance can be purchased by the school district at less cost.²⁶

2. Public ownership of the buses makes possible a more flexible transportation program. The contract plan usually requires a written contract specifying a certain size of vehicle to furnish service on a given route of a certain number of miles. Any changes in routing during the year require adjustments in the terms of the contract; added services, such as making instructional trips, require further contract readjustments. Under school ownership the program can be adapted at any time to changing conditions as the need arises.
3. Public ownership places full operational control where it belongs, in the hands of the superintendent. Bus drivers are directly responsible to him or to the transportation supervisor, as the case may be. Duties and responsibilities of drivers can be clearly defined, making changes and adaptations at any time conditions warrant; relationships between drivers and other school personnel can be kept open and aboveboard without having to deal through the contractor as a sort of intermediary.
4. Under public ownership the school system is better able to get the kind of drivers needed. Sound employment procedures give the school officials opportunity to secure the kind of drivers that both school officials and community people believe should be employed. Driver training programs can be made more effective when the drivers are employees of the local school system.

INSURANCE

All local school boards and superintendents having responsibilities for providing pupil transportation services are confronted with a whole series of problems relating to insurance. Is the school district liable for negligence of its employees resulting in personal injury to pupils while riding publicly owned school buses? If so, is liability insurance required or optional? If the state does not have specific legislation, removing the immunity of school districts from tort action, can a school district in such a state legally purchase liability insurance? In such instances would an insurance policy have any validity if tested in the courts? If not, would it be safe to depend on the insurance company's stated willingness to settle all claims resulting from pupil injury without resort to court action? What does the experience among the

²⁶ Burton H. Belknap, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

states indicate as best practice with respect to school transportation insurance?

The last question can readily be disposed of with the statement that the most confusing picture in the entire field of pupil transportation is that of insurance practices. About two-thirds of the states more or less definitely approve liability insurance on publicly owned buses, six states requiring it; but in twenty-six states it is optional with the local districts, in five states it is definitely prohibited, and in six others the authority of the school district in this respect has not been defined by state laws, regulations, or by legal opinion. However, some states have established supplementary provisions for compensation in cases of pupil injury. In Alabama and North Carolina injured pupils are compensated from state appropriations, with payments allotted by special boards. In thirteen states local boards may carry general accident insurance policies which provide benefit payments in cases of pupil injury, including those occurring in school bus accidents; such accident insurance policies have no relationship to liability insurance, however. Variations in practices concerning other types of school bus insurance, including property damage, collision, fire, and theft, are equally great.²⁷ In fact, the entire picture varies so much from state to state that local boards and superintendents would probably gain nothing through attempts to determine practices outside their own state.

One of the first tasks confronting officials of local school systems is that of getting a clear picture of the pupil transportation insurance situation in the state. Where certain types of insurance, such as public liability, are mandatory or are clearly permissible, this is not much of a problem. The same holds true where state laws, court decisions, opinions, and rulings of the attorneys general clearly state the powers of the board or the limitations placed upon it. But in states where there are no specific laws and regulations or court decisions spelling out the authority of school districts, local school officials face grave difficulties in determining what course of action to take. At present there are many states where school boards can, after exhausting all available sources of information, obtain nothing more than an ex-

²⁷ U.S. Office of Education, *School Transportation Insurance*, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1948, No. 101, pp. 8-30.

tremely vague definition of their authority and duty regarding liability and property damage insurance, as well as whatever rights they may have to insure their buses against fire, theft, and collision. Obviously, in such instances there is great need for clarification of the school district's role in insurance practices. In fact, there is need for such clarification in most states.

Local school officials have every right to know what their duties and responsibilities are in this area. If the local district is immune to tort action or if its lack of immunity is not definitely established, the board has the right to know whether it can legally expend public funds for liability and property damage. Moreover, boards have the right to know whether insurance policies they may purchase have any validity when the school district itself is immune from liability. Thus, even where the insurance company waived defense of governmental immunity, it would be necessary to know whether suit could be brought against the school boards to determine the amount of damages for the insurance company to pay. Unless this can be done it is difficult to see how an insurance policy would be of any value. Certainly, all local school officials have every right to know whether the tax dollars expended for insurance are bringing needed protection or are being spent for a mirage having the appearance of protection.

After the powers and duties of the local school system with respect to school bus insurance have been clearly determined, there still remains the problem of deciding what types of insurance coverage are justified. Some authorities²⁸ claim that collision insurance is a poor investment—that if proper precautions are taken in operating school buses safely, the cost of repairs resulting from collisions will be far less than the premiums on collision insurance. The same conclusion is made with respect to fire and theft insurance—when sound maintenance practices are used, the fire hazard is very low. Belknap²⁹ states that during his twenty years' experience in the New York State Education Department only three school buses have been lost by fire. The danger of loss by theft is even more remote.

Public liability and property damage insurance should be carried in

²⁸ See D. P. Culp, *op. cit.*, p. 53, and Burton H. Belknap, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

all cases when it is possible to do so with bona fide protection. The amount of coverage should by all means be high enough to cover damage claims adequately. Frequently the minimum requirements set by statute are too low, often considerably lower than the average levels of claims settled in the courts. Belknap states that the statutory minimums for New York State are \$5000 and \$50,000 public liability and \$5000 property damage for thirty-one to fifty-five-pupil-capacity buses; but judging from claims settled by court litigation, the coverage should be \$25,000 and \$250,000 public liability and \$10,000 property damage to provide the protection needed. Usually, the extra cost of obtaining additional coverage to adequate levels is not at all high.

SCHOOL BUS OPERATION

Considerable attention to various operating procedures has already been given in the preceding section on organization of the pupil transportation program. It was necessary to do this in order to illustrate certain techniques of good organization and the fundamental importance of establishing an organizational structure in terms of its functions and objectives. For the structural organization, however soundly conceived and carefully established, is not an end in itself. It exists so that pupil transportation can be provided with safety, efficiency, and at reasonable cost. It provides the framework within which sound operational procedures can be carried on.

Thus, successful operation of the program depends first of all on good organization. But more is required. Getting the program into action requires careful planning on many fronts, exercise of initiative and foresight in attending to many details, and just plain hard work on the part of many people.

ESTABLISHING BUS ROUTES

The location of school bus routes so that efficient transportation services can be provided involves a number of clearly defined steps. The first is locating the homes of pupils to be transported. This should be done by spot-mapping them on a map of sufficient size (a scale of one inch to the mile is usually large enough). The attendance areas of each school enrolling transported pupils should be delineated; often

it is helpful to use contrasting colors to locate transported pupils attending each school. It is usually advisable to use different color schemes for elementary and high school pupils. Where sizable numbers of transported pupils live close together, as in hamlets or villages, numerals should be used instead of individual pins or dots. However, in congested areas a map of larger scale should be used so that pupils can be located reasonably accurately and a clear picture of the transportation situation can be presented.

When all pupils have been located, steps can be taken to locate the bus routes for transporting them. The various types of roads should be clearly marked on the map, indicating all-weather primary highways, surfaced farm-to-market roads, and those that are unsurfaced. The type of each road or highway to be used requires careful consideration so that, wherever the pupil load permits, plans can be made to operate smaller buses on the least satisfactory highways. Admittedly, in many instances this cannot be worked out as well as might be desired. Existing conditions have to be accepted as they are both with respect to location of the pupils and road conditions. However, a careful analysis of the entire transportation situation, as revealed by an accurate spot map which also shows the county road system, gives the county superintendent and the transportation supervisor opportunity to plan bus routes objectively and with maximum effectiveness. Moreover, such a map is highly useful in dealing with county road officials concerning needed improvements on roads being used as bus routes.

Type of Route. The type of bus route selected depends on a number of factors, including the size of the school district, number and condition of the roads, sparsity of the pupil population requiring transportation service, and the number and types of school buses available. Circular routes, beginning and ending at the school, are more commonly used in smaller districts having road systems making the plan feasible and where it is best to house the buses in a heated garage located on the school grounds. The "shoestring" type of route, beginning at the farthest point from the school in the morning and ending at that point in the afternoon, is more commonly used in larger districts, particularly where the location of the pupils make this plan more practical. The "feeder" type of route is often used to good advantage, especially

in more sparsely populated areas where small buses, station wagons, or even cars are used to transport pupils to a main bus route where they are transferred to a larger bus routed directly to the central school. Multiple routes, with the bus making more than one trip, are commonly used in many school systems. This plan makes possible a greater utilization of buses and more economical service. Where the second trip does not require much time and where the daily schedules in the schools can be adjusted so that pupils are not kept waiting at the school in the morning or afternoon, the multiple type of route has genuine advantages. However, when pupils have long idle waiting periods at the school or when pupils transported on the first morning trip have to leave home early and are not returned home until long after their last class period at school, obvious pupil handicaps result which would be extremely difficult if not impossible to justify even for reasons of economy. After all, economy obtained by impairment of good service is a poor bargain indeed.

After routes have been tentatively selected, each should be carefully examined so that needless duplications can be eliminated and service extended to areas that might earlier have been overlooked. Again, the spot map with each route designated on it can be put to good use. No bus route should be finally selected until it has been examined firsthand for road conditions and traffic hazards. Culp³⁰ recommends that both the transportation supervisor and the local school principal should drive over each proposed route before the schools open in the fall, identifying traffic hazards along the way and noting safe and convenient locations of pupil stops.

Bus Stops. Pupil stops should be selected by the transportation supervisor, with the local principal helping whenever practicable. This responsibility should not be left with the bus driver. All stops should be selected in full accord with school board policies on the matter and should not be changed except by the transportation supervisor when conditions warrant. Pupil convenience requires that bus stops not be spaced too far apart. Culp³¹ recommends that where conditions permit, stops should not be closer than two-tenths of a mile apart. All loading

³⁰ D. P. Culp, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

and unloading stops are time-consuming and those that are unnecessary increase the time that pupils have to spend on the bus. Wherever possible, stops should be located where the bus can pull off the highway and where drivers of other vehicles can see the bus for some distance from either direction.

Walking Distance. Another consideration in planning the bus route involves deciding whether to transport pupils living reasonably close to the school. School boards should have clear-cut policies on this. While most states require local boards to provide transportation for all pupils living beyond a specified distance from the school, ranging from a half-mile in one state to three miles in another, this is not always a matter which can be determined equitably on the basis of distance. For children having to walk a mile along a busy highway to and from school, the basic problem is not distance but pupil safety. With highway traffic becoming heavier each year and with highway accident rates climbing, pupil safety in walking to and from school has become a highly important issue confronting local school boards and superintendents.

TIME SCHEDULES

The time pupils must spend on the bus is always a highly important factor to consider in school bus operation. From the pupil's standpoint the time factor is more important than distance. Some authorities say the maximum time on the bus for elementary pupils should not exceed forty-five minutes each way, and for high school pupils not over an hour each way. These are theoretical maximums which, however soundly conceived, are often exceeded in actual practice, sometimes by necessity and sometimes as the result of inadequate standards of service. Wherever possible and consistent with standards of safety, the time limits should be less than the maximums stated above. No pupil should have to spend more time en route to and from school than is necessarily required by sound school bus scheduling.

Careful planning of the bus routes is an important factor in this. The same applies to location of the minimum number of bus stops which are convenient and safe for the pupils. But the total time pupils are en route to and from school must be considered, including the time required to walk to bus stop and the wait there before boarding

the bus. Where feeder bus routes are involved, the waiting involved in transferring from the feeder bus to the larger bus must also be considered.

Sound planning cuts unnecessary waiting to a minimum. Before schools open in the fall each bus driver should be given a route schedule indicating the route to be followed, the location of each stop, and the names of the pupils to be transported. Each driver should drive over his bus route before schools open so he can make an estimate of the time required, as well as locate each stop and note traffic conditions and hazards. During the first few days of operation the time of arrival at each stop should be recorded. As soon as possible a definite time schedule should be prepared, copies of which are given to the transportation supervisor, the local principal, and one copy posted in the bus. Pupils and parents should be notified about the arrival time, both morning and afternoon, at each stop.

Where winter driving conditions require more time, the schedule should be adjusted seasonally to allow for this. Definite policies should be established requiring drivers to operate their buses at speeds well within the safety limits for each particular route. Policies should likewise be established with respect to the length of waiting time at stops when pupils are late in arriving.

SAFETY MEASURES

Practically every aspect of the pupil transportation program is either directly or indirectly concerned with safety. As already noted, the construction of the bus involves strict adherence to safety standards, bus routes and stops are located for maximum pupil safety, and the drivers are trained in safe operation of the buses and safe management of transported pupils. Vigilance with respect to safety must be ever present in all pupil transportation activities.

Although it is not practicable to spell out here all the various ways and means used to operate the pupil transportation program, there are four areas that merit special mention:

1. Use of pupil patrols or driver's assistants. Many school systems use pupil patrols to assist bus drivers in a number of ways relating to safe operation of the bus. Selected from the older, more mature pupils riding

the bus, the pupil patrol helps with loading and unloading the pupils, helps to keep proper behavior on the bus, and requires pupils to observe safety rules while en route. Some school systems have training programs conducted by principals and teachers for their bus patrols, each of whom is elected by the pupils riding his bus.

2. Educating the pupils in school bus safety. The bus driver and pupil patrol cannot do all that needs to be done in developing pupil attitudes and habits of safety. This is a job for the school and a clear-cut program should be established in which principals, teachers, bus drivers, pupil patrols, and the transported pupils themselves take an active part in developing and conducting. Every pupil riding a school bus should be taught the safety rules to be observed and to develop an alertness to hazards to his safety and to that of his fellow passengers while en route to and from school.
3. Establishing safe loading and unloading procedures. Although the driver has primary responsibility, the assistance of a well-trained patrol is invaluable. Drivers, patrols, and pupils should all be trained in their responsibilities so that each knows exactly what to do in all loading and unloading situations. Where pupils have to cross the highway either to board the bus or to alight from it, both the driver and the patrol have to take extra precautions. However well the pupils are trained in their roles, both the driver and the patrol must constantly be on the alert to prevent accidents caused, not only by careless and irresponsible motorists, but also by a pupil's failure to observe a safety rule he has consistently observed in the past. This applies to loading and unloading procedures at the school as well as on the highway. In fact, there should be a carefully worked out plan for loading and unloading at every school having transported pupils.
4. Making frequent inspections of the bus. In addition to the periodic mechanical inspections which are part of the preventive maintenance program, every bus driver should make a daily inspection of his bus, noting the condition of the tires and making sure that the brakes, signal lights, and steering mechanism are in proper working order. He should also be constantly on the alert to detect other mechanical defects before they become dangerous.

Weekly inspections should be made by a mechanic's helper or driver-mechanic. More detailed monthly inspections should be made by a competent mechanic, checking all items included on a special report form prepared for this purpose. A much more comprehensive inspec-

tion should be made annually during the summer.³² Any defects found by the bus driver or during the monthly and annual inspections which would impair in any way the safe operation of the bus should be corrected before it is put in service again.

MAINTENANCE PRACTICES

Even though he usually is not a mechanic, the school bus driver holds a key position in the maintenance program. A poor driver, if allowed to continue, can cause enough damage to equipment to keep five mechanics busy. Thus, a sound program of maintenance must begin with training drivers to become maintenance-conscious. They need not be trained as mechanics. However, they must have a practical knowledge of the bus chassis, including the functions of its major working parts, as well as a general knowledge of the working parts of the body, such as doors and windows. Their use of this knowledge is not to make repairs but to be able to recognize the possibility of need for repairs and to report it.

Preventive maintenance, which deals with detection and correction of mechanical difficulties before they cause serious damage, begins with the bus driver. It begins with the driver who detects the poorly tuned motor; notes that the brake pedal depresses too much on down-grade stops; observes a missing inner-tube valve cap, an increase in oil consumption, faulty steering, or a generator not charging properly. Developing this "feel," this know-how to observe intelligently and to report promptly, is a teamwork process involving the transportation supervisor and the bus mechanics helping the bus drivers to become the first line of defense in the maintenance program.

Equally essential are the periodic inspections referred to in the preceding section. These inspections require skills that many mechanics do not possess because the emphasis here is on detecting possible causes of mechanical difficulties before damage to the bus results. For this reason the inspecting mechanic should have specialized training for his job.

³² For information concerning items to be inspected monthly and annually see E. Glenn Featherston and Andrew H. Gibbs, *Records and Reports for Pupil Transportation*, Special Series, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1949, No. 2, Forms 11 and 12, pp. 20-21.

There are some persons who question the desirability of a school system employing the mechanics and establishing the shop facilities necessary for carrying on a maintenance program. The usual objection is that it will add another burden to already overworked administrators and that "it is just as cheap to have the local garages up town make whatever repairs are necessary." This point of view completely overlooks the underlying purposes of a preventive maintenance program and takes a narrow view of the school administrator's functions as well. As mentioned earlier, if the school system operates more than twenty buses it can afford to employ a supervisor to administer the transportation program, including supervising maintenance of the buses; for smaller fleets a part-time supervisor with responsibility for some other phase of the school program could be justified.

Moreover, economy in upkeep and repairs, although this is an important factor, is not the sole reason for a preventive maintenance program. It brings increased safety for the pupils because a bus which is regularly and completely inspected is far less likely to have mechanical troubles which cause accidents. It also increases the efficiency of the transportation system; breakdowns removing buses from service for several days at a time are avoided by detecting and correcting the causes before major damage is done. In fact, a school system cannot have a preventive maintenance program worthy of the name unless trained servicemen are employed and the necessary shop facilities established.

Culp³³ states that a full-time serviceman is needed for every ten buses, or one driver-mechanic for every five buses. If more than one school is served by buses there should be one or more auxiliary shops located in strategic places in addition to the central shop, which should be adequately equipped to take care of major jobs.

RECORDS AND REPORTS

The importance of an adequate system of records and reports can hardly be overestimated in developing a safe and efficient pupil transportation program. Good records furnish information essential to making an accurate evaluation of transportation services provided for

³³ D. P. Culp, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

pupils in the county; they furnish a sound basis upon which to plan for further improvements, to provide more adequate service, to improve safety procedures, and to spend the school tax dollar budgeted for transportation more wisely.

While state requirements with respect to pupil transportation records and reports vary greatly, county school administrators are confronted with the task of establishing and maintaining the kinds of records and reports which will enable them to keep the transportation program moving forward safely and efficiently. Usually, the records and reports system will include the following:

1. A permanent record of information concerning both the bus chassis and the bus body.
2. Monthly and annual inspection reports on each bus.
3. Annual and monthly reports of the transportation supervisor, giving cost data on operation, maintenance and repairs, and number of miles traveled by each bus.
4. Where a repair shop is operated, monthly and annual reports by the head mechanic.
5. Monthly and annual reports for each school and for the school system concerning the number of elementary and high school pupils transported.
6. School bus accident reports.
7. Special trip authorization and driver report.
8. School bus schedule.

In 1948 the United States Office of Education initiated a project, with the assistance of a committee composed of state department of education representatives, to develop a set of sample forms for pupil transportation records and reports designed for use in local school systems. County superintendents and transportation supervisors engaged in developing forms for recording and reporting information about their transportation programs will find many valuable suggestions in the report³⁴ of this project.

SELECTED REFERENCES

Belknap, Burton H., *The School Bus*, Educational Publishers, Inc., Philadelphia, 1950.

³⁴ E. Glenn Featherston and Andrew H. Gibbs, *op. cit.*

Although a portion of this publication deals with the technical aspects of school-bus body and chassis construction, county superintendents and transportation supervisors will find elsewhere in the volume much highly practical information on school bus operation, preventive maintenance, and cost analysis.

Butterworth, Julian E., and Ruegsegger, Virgil, *Administering Pupil Transportation*, Educational Publishers, Inc., Philadelphia, 1941.

Deals with many administrative problems that arise in pupil transportation which are applicable in county school systems. The sections on selecting and training bus drivers and other transportation personnel, as well as the section on planning bus routes, are especially helpful.

Culp, D. P., *An Administrator's Handbook of School Transportation*, Alabama State Department of Education, Montgomery, 1950, Bulletin No. 4.

Written by a man who successively has had experience as a bus driver, transportation supervisor, county superintendent, and transportation director in a state department of education, this handbook is one of the few outstanding contributions to the literature on pupil transportation. Practical and down-to-earth, it contains a wealth of suggestions on safety provisions, economical operation of the buses, providing adequate transportation services, and establishing preventive maintenance programs.

Featherston, E. Glenn, *School Bus Maintenance*, U.S. Office of Education Bulletin, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1948, No. 2.

A comprehensive and practical treatment concerning the organization of a preventive maintenance program; contains sample record and report forms relating to maintenance.

Noble, M. C. S., Jr., *Pupil Transportation in the United States*, International Textbook Company, Scranton, 1940.

Presents a comprehensive picture of pupil transportation in the United States prior to 1939. A valuable source book of a large amount of statistical information, gathered together for the first time.

CHAPTER XVIII

Evaluation and Adjustment

Evaluation in some form goes on continuously in every school system. Superintendents and other school officials with management and leadership responsibilities make observations and form judgments as to whether or not school bus schedules are satisfactory, buildings are in proper condition, teaching materials are appropriate, staff meetings are successful, and appraisals of a host of other comparable activities related to the organization and operation of schools. The necessity and usefulness of such operational evaluation are so obvious that no further comment is needed. But it is not enough. For the most part, it looks at what the school has rather than at its products, and has little of the breadth and perspective needed to take a long-range view of the character of the administrative process and the quality of the educational program.

EVALUATING THE SUPERINTENDENT'S LEADERSHIP

In the well-organized and administered county school system, the superintendent pauses at regular intervals, much as the businessman does, to take inventory and to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of his enterprise, to take stock of his accomplishments, and to evaluate himself as a professional leader.

PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVES AND PHILOSOPHY

A realistic appraisal of what might be called the professional objectives and personal attributes of the superintendent is an important

part of this critical inquiry. If he is worthy of his salt, his philosophy and his ideals are inevitably reflected in the educational program for which he is responsible. The team of pupils, teachers, local administrators, school board members, and parents with whom he works is not only guided by his leadership but catches his spirit for accomplishment and growth, or, in unfortunate situations, becomes afflicted with his lethargy and floats aimlessly along like bits of driftwood on a sluggish stream. The old adage, "As is the teacher, so is the school," can aptly be restated to read, "As is the county superintendent, so is the county school system."

CHARACTER OF LEADERSHIP

But it is equally important that the evaluation of the county superintendent's administrative leadership be a searching inquiry into his ways of working, the use being made of the resources placed at his disposal, the degree to which the purposes and objectives of the school system are being accomplished, and the extent to which opportunities for growth and progress are being utilized. John Stuart Mill, in his inaugural address at St. Andrews, pointed out that those who know how to employ opportunities will often find a way to create them.¹ It is this elusive, open-end character of leadership that gives tone and verve to the quality of the educational program which needs to be searched out and analyzed in evaluating the county superintendent's work.

THE PROCESS OF EVALUATION

There are two important aspects of every objective evaluation. The first is relevant data in the form of objectively described observations. The second is a set of standards, criteria, or values against which the data can be checked. The first implies measurement and frequently involves the use of an instrument of some sort as an aid to accurate observation. The second involves interpretation and the exercise of judgment.²

Refinement of measurement and clarification of the criteria against

¹ F. A. Cavenagh, *James and John Stuart Mill on Education*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1931, p. 197.

² C. C. Ross, *Measurement in Today's Schools*, second edition, Prentice-Hall, New York, 1947, pp. 488-514.

which observations are checked are important ways of improving evaluation, but these are by no means the only ways. One must continuously ask if the right data are being secured and if the standards used as a basis for interpretation are the best available guides to decision and action.

Evaluating any phase of an educational program, whether interest is primarily directed toward the accomplishments of pupils, teachers, school board members, or superintendent, is a difficult undertaking if it is carefully and properly done. Because of the complexity of the task, the practice of selecting as indices of quality various aspects of the program or area of activity that lend themselves readily to objective measurement has been commonly followed. For example, average expenditures for each pupil enrolled, pupil-teacher ratio, and length of school term are indexes used quite commonly in judging the quality of educational programs. In a quite similar manner, the salary received by a superintendent, the size of the school district in which he is employed, and the number of professional employees on the staff are marks of distinction closely associated with his professional status and prestige. The tendency to interpret too broadly or to attach undue significance to such factors is one of the most serious limitations to this approach to evaluation. Superintendents themselves are as prone to such overemphasis and exaggerations as anyone else. The obeisance paid by the profession to bigness of school districts almost leads one to wonder if it is possible for a great superintendent to develop in a small school system.

Relatively high per pupil expenditures or a low pupil-teacher ratio do not mean that good educational opportunities are being provided in a school system or that educational leadership has been effective. Such details are only vantage points from which the organization and operation of the school system can be observed with a little more clarity. Quality of leadership, as well as of educational opportunity, is a result of a complex interaction of many factors.

APPRAISAL BY THE LAY PUBLIC

In the absence of refined methods and instruments of evaluation, crude measures are used and judgment is formed that does not always reflect understanding and the wisdom of long-range perspective.

Church has called attention to the tendency for superintendents to be appraised in terms of how well they follow public sentiment rather than on the quality of their leadership. The degree to which they are judged to be successful, he maintains, is determined by their willingness and skill in:

1. Placating parents
2. Satisfying politicians
3. Appeasing taxpayers
4. Emphasizing athletics
5. Meeting the demands of small but powerful minority groups³

It scarcely needs to be pointed out that the kind of community evaluation of the school superintendent suggested above emerges from waves of public sentiment and reaction set in motion by such incidents and events as a shift in the balance of power of social or political groups, a proposed change in the tax rate, or a losing basketball team. It has none of the earmarks of a carefully planned and refined type of evaluation, but it is none the less effective. The superintendent's position and professional reputation and, to a very great extent, the well-being of the entire school system hang in the balance during periods of tension. That they are not tilted downward, with loss of the gains of many years, more often seems to be a matter of luck rather than of considered community judgment or effective educational leadership.

Lack of concern for quality of leadership is a commonly recognized characteristic of many overall community evaluations of the school superintendent. People tend to be either for him or against him and seek to justify their positions on the basis of specific issues and events that are labled as either good or bad. Few in-between shades or graduated degrees of feeling are expressed. The incompetency of a bus driver, alleged immorality of a teacher, injury to a pupil on the playground, use of a particular textbook in the classroom, become points around which community sentiment toward the superintendent gathers and is fanned to glowing heat. Little attention is given to conditions under which the superintendent has worked, the resources available

³ Harold H. Church, "How Shall Superintendents Be Judged?" *The Nation's Schools*, May, 1950, pp. 32-33.

for use, the job he has been asked to do, and the progress that has been made.

The issues around which sentiment toward intermediate district superintendents forms during periods when critical decisions are being made frequently differ from the issues involved in community appraisal of the local superintendent's work. School district reorganization, selection of a building site, location of a bus route, enforcement of the compulsory attendance law, are typical examples of issues which have weighed heavily in the appointment or election of many county superintendents. Situations in which county superintendents have been selected or dismissed largely because of political party affiliation are by no means unknown.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR OBJECTIVE LAY EVALUATION RESTS WITH SUPERINTENDENTS

No clear-thinking educator would maintain for a moment that the people of a community or a county school system should not actively and purposely concern themselves with their school superintendent's work. Quite to the contrary, schoolmen are urging lay citizens to take a more active part in school affairs, and one of the points at which the public comes into vital contact with the school system most frequently is through the superintendent. Unless he enjoys the confidence and respect of a great majority of the lay citizens, as well as the respect of pupils, teachers, and school board members, neither he nor they can work effectively. The important point is that such evaluation be made in an objective, considered, reasonable manner rather than on the basis of an assortment of rumors, half-truths, and misconceptions.

The impression should not be left that all county school systems and communities pounce upon their superintendents at regular intervals and subject them to harsh and unwarranted criticism in the process of evaluating their work. In the great majority of instances, superintendents are well respected and treated with the consideration and dignity they rightly deserve. They go on serving the school system in which they are employed, uninterrupted, year after year, with scarcely more than a passing interest of the general public in how well or how poorly they are serving as educational leaders. It is the

exceptional community or county in which the quality of the superintendent's work has been carefully studied and fully appreciated by a majority of the lay citizens.

The fault lies with the superintendents themselves. If people are to exercise better judgment in deciding whether or not they have good county educational leadership, superintendents themselves must initiate objective, impersonal evaluative studies that can be made during periods relatively free from strains and tensions.

PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION

The Southern States Work-Conference on Educational Problems, in a report of a study of administrative leadership, emphasizes the importance of measuring behavior in its relation to initial purpose and the need for greater recognition of human values in the evaluative process. In keeping with this viewpoint, this conference set forth the following principles to serve as guides in the development of techniques and criteria for evaluating administrative leadership

1. Evaluation should afford the opportunity for individual self-improvement.
2. Evaluation should recognize the potential for change in the individual.
3. Evaluation should respect the integrity of the individual.
4. Evaluation should be a cooperative process.
5. Evaluation should involve both terminal and continuous appraisals.
6. Evaluation should employ objective evidence obtained from a wide range of sources.
7. Evaluation should include subjective judgments, and to the degree that the range and variety of these judgments can be increased to that degree the evaluative process becomes more valid.
8. Evaluation should ascertain the competencies and deficiencies of the individual in terms of the program.
9. Evaluation should recognize a specific situation in terms of the total educational enterprise.
10. Evaluation should assist the leadership to understand the school and community situation as it is and its relation to that situation.
11. Evaluation should utilize and coordinate all available resources.⁴

⁴ R. L. Johns, (ed.), *Developing Administrative Leadership for Our Schools*, Southern States Work-Conference on Educational Problems, Florida State Department of Education, Tallahassee, 1952, pp. 49-50.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

For many years the practice of making surveys has been common. Perhaps the most serious limitation of the survey as a device for evaluating educational leadership is that it tends to be identified with specific problems calling for decision and action that carry a note of finality which overshadows its diagnostic qualities.

COÖPERATIVE STUDY

A new and promising procedure for making evaluating studies of the responsibilities of school superintendents and how they work has been developed by Teachers College, Columbia University, as a field study device in the Cooperative Project in Educational Administration. In this coöperative study plan, a series of teams—each of which is comprised of the superintendent, a school board member, and a layman from each of five different coöperating communities, making a total of fifteen persons on each team—arrange suitable schedules and visit each coöperating school system for the purpose of analyzing the chief school officer's work.

Evaluation is not the immediate purpose of this coöperative study program. Rather, the study has been planned for the purpose of arriving at a clearer understanding of what the superintendent is expected to do and the way he works, but the implications for a fruitful type of evaluation are quite clear. The superintendent has not only a chance to take a close-up, penetrating look at his own situation, but also to view it with the perspective of comparison with comparable situations in the schools of other members of the team.

Carefully Planned Observation. The discussion, study, and reports of each team visit are organized under the three following general headings:

1. Handling routine administrative functions such as budget development, employment of personnel, in-service education of staff, managing insurance, and financial accounting.
2. Handling interrupted routine, as, for example, making needed adaptations in the system of records and reports, pupil accounting, supply management, plant operation, and special services. Are these and other like functions taking too much time? Are there day-to-day jobs that are

not getting enough attention? What practices are most helpful in meeting problems created by interrupted, routinized procedures? These are questions that are considered by the group as the administrative procedures in each school system are analyzed.

3. Identifying and handling new problems, including involvement of more people in the educational program through lay advisory committees and citizens' councils, identifying community educational needs, stimulating, inventing, planning, and keeping acquainted with the community.⁵

In each instance, special attention is directed to the how and why of the administrative process in particular school systems. It is a diagnostic kind of study which seeks to ferret out strengths and weaknesses that can be used as a basis for improvement rather than pulling information together for promotional or destructive purposes.

QUALITY OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Appraising the quality of relationships that exist between a county superintendent who is aware of his responsibilities for providing leadership and a staff of teachers and local administrators who look to him for stimulation and guidance is a delicate task. Procedures, accomplishments, and goals are interrelated at every point. Practices, no matter how ideally they are conceived, have but little purpose unless they contribute to reaching desired ends. And achievements that do not pave the way for further accomplishment are but little more than distance traveled down a dead-end street. Until more refined instruments of measurement are developed than are now generally available, evaluation of the relationships between the instructional staff and the county superintendent will be largely of a subjective nature. But this limitation does not prevent and should nowise discourage undertaking evaluative studies of these relationships.

SELF-STUDY OF PURPOSES AND VALUES

This intimate, searching type of evaluation should be quietly and unobtrusively initiated by the superintendent himself as a kind of

⁵ Metropolitan School Study Council, *The Changing Character of the Superintendent's Job*, a Guide for the Analysis of the Job of the Superintendent of Schools in Council Communities, 525 West 120 Street, New York, 1950 (mimeographed), pp. 1-28.

self-study. It will have little of the character of terminal appraisal, that is, to ascertain the extent to which goals have been reached. Rather, it will be in the nature of an effort to determine how well the superintendent is doing, the validity of viewpoints, the effectiveness of practices, the mistakes that have been made, and indications of progress toward desired ends. It will of necessity be a continuous, long-range study that reexamines values and purposes in the light of new information and developments.

Staff Members Participate. Counsel from outside sources, as colleges and universities, state departments of education, and nearby school systems, can be used to good advantage. As the study progresses, the instructional staff, as well as pupils in the various schools, board members, and parents, will be involved. Emphasis will not be directed toward a pinpoint analysis of the superintendent as an individual. Instead, it will be directed toward an impersonal study of the whole process of county and community educational leadership.

Many Observations Recorded in Narrative Form. While the outlines of such an evaluative study are broad and general, the observations that are recorded and that serve as a basis for judgment formation may very well be specific items or incidents that appear to be trivial and insignificant if considered outside the pattern of human relationships existing in the leadership process. Many of these observations can best be recorded in the form of anecdotal records and brief narrative reports. Excerpts selected at random from the report of an extended school experience, in which the superintendent, teachers, pupils, and parents in a rural school worked together in improving the educational program, suggest types of information that can be used to good advantage in evaluating educational leadership.

We need to state problems separately and solve them one at a time. Today, in our teachers' meeting, we considered whether or not pupils should be allowed in the gymnasium during the lunch hour, discipline, keys for the gymnasium door, the home room, use of new pupil record forms, forms for reporting home visits, and problems of an individual pupil. We were unable to focus attention on any one thing long enough to make any worth-while accomplishment.

The creative power of silence is a wonderful resource. Today, on two

occasions, I could have blurted out the information that was needed. But I held my tongue and in each instance a member of the group came up with the right answer.

Whenever possible, leadership responsibilities are given to others. For example, I asked several teachers to take responsibility for leading discussions at the regional meeting and have invited them to represent the school before local civic groups.

I took time off to go over a pupil's folder with a new teacher to whom a folder was an innovation.

I was unsuccessful in an interview with a parent concerning his child because I was thinking primarily of my own responsibility for the smooth operation of the school rather than of the parent's interest in his child's schoolwork.

Yesterday, I had a conference with a teacher which began with his saying that he wanted to confess his failure. This wasn't right. He didn't really want to confess failure. He wanted encouragement.⁶

Daily Recorded Observations. Keeping a diary is a simple device, which any superintendent can follow without expense and with but little trouble, that will identify such critical incidents and preserve them for use in taking a long-range view of the way he functions as an educational leader. Personnel records of pupils and teachers, minutes of board meetings, bulletins to teachers, contributions to professional magazines, and addresses to public meetings are other sources of information that can be used for evaluative purposes.

In a sense, professional educational leadership is what it does. Unless it explores, initiates, encourages, and gives direction to the capacities for growth and development that reside individually and collectively in the people it is expected to serve, it scarcely exists. To evaluate leadership, attention must be directed to how it functions as well as to its end products of successful undertakings and failures.

REASON WHY SUPERINTENDENTS SUCCEED AND FAIL

In an effort to identify limitations in the professional preparation of school administrators, the National Institutional Placement Associa-

⁶ These excerpts are adaptations from situations reported by Glyn Morris, *Practical Guidance Methods for Principals and Teachers*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1952.

tion circulated an inquiry to the placement officers in the different states which asked the reasons for the success and failure of school administrators with whom they had been associated. The fifty-five replies from placement officers in twenty-one states reported in the study were predominantly of a negative nature. That is, they tended to mention failure and to point out reasons for failure much more frequently than success and reasons for success. This led the reporter of the study to conclude that failure in school administrators is much more readily observed than success.

Among the many reasons for failure of school administrators cited in this study were the following:

1. Lack of ability to organize and to delegate responsibility. In a particular situation, cited as an illustrative example, the superintendent had moved from a small system into a position with an increased amount of responsibility. He was unsuccessful in the larger system because he felt he must personally oversee every detail.
2. Going too fast in making changes. Superintendents exhibit lack of real understanding of human relations by attempting to make important changes without the understanding and support of a large percentage of the teachers and the public.
3. Inability to select capable people as assistants in key positions.
4. Failure to give credit where credit is due.
5. Favoritism toward persons or groups.
6. Insensitivity to others' feelings.
7. Suspicious of everybody, including members of the board.
8. Failure to keep the public well informed about what the schools are doing.
9. Limiting social contacts in the community to the relatively small group of socially elite.
10. Talking down to teachers.
11. Lack of adaptability.
12. Unwillingness to accept ideas of other people.

The important contribution this study makes to the evaluation of school administration is in calling attention to critical points in the leadership process. An important limitation is that failure tends to be regarded as the absence of success, as indicated by inability to hold

on to a job, secure authorization for a bond issue, or develop a high quality teaching staff. And, indeed, these are important criteria for forming judgment about the quality and effectiveness of a superintendent's work, but a good evaluative procedure goes much deeper. It identifies and gives consideration to degrees of failure and success and takes into account the conditions under which the superintendent works. There are, undoubtedly, many situations in which people successfully hold on to leadership positions because they "sit tight" and don't disturb existing conditions. There are many other situations in which able and capable leaders fail because of the influence of factors over which they have no control.

The reasons for success in school administration pointed out in the study made by the National Institutional Teacher Placement Association included:

1. Vital interest in the job.
2. Excellent public relations program.
3. Modesty in manner of approach.
4. Courage to stand up for their convictions,
5. Belief that the school should be part and parcel of community life.
6. Knack for getting along with teachers and people in the community.
7. Understanding of human motives and drives.
8. Recognition of people for what they are rather than for what they ought to be.
9. Keen judgment of public thinking.
10. Ability to give careful attention to business without neglecting people.

One of the most notable characteristics of the long list of reasons cited in this study for the success or failure of school administrators is the strong emphasis on the need for understanding the basic needs, desires, and drives that motivate people to action and the skills that are involved in working successfully with these forces. True evaluation of the superintendent's work must somehow come to a better understanding of these forces and processes.⁷

⁷ National Institutional Teacher Placement Association, *Some Reasons Why School Administrators Succeed or Fail*, a Report to the National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration, AASA Regional Conference, St. Louis, February, 1952 (mimeographed).

CHECK LIST AS AN EVALUATIVE DEVICE

Evaluation that is limited to the use of a check list in and of itself cannot penetrate far below the surface. At best, it can give little more than a hasty overview of the whole program of administrative leadership and a superficial understanding of its processes. Yet, in the absence of a well-developed plan of evaluation, county superintendents have used simple check lists to a good advantage as self-study devices. An example of such a check list, used for the purpose of gaining more understanding of the avenues or channels through which educational leadership has been asserted by the county superintendent, is included in Table 13 for illustrative purposes.

WHAT ARE THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS?

County superintendents in a self-analysis of their leadership may well give attention to such end results as:

1. Increase in levies made by local boards of education in the county.
2. Changes in the certification of teachers.
3. Increase in salaries for teachers.
4. Increase in the salary of the superintendent and members of his immediate staff.
5. Provisions made during the year by local districts for employment of persons in leadership positions on a twelve-month basis.
6. Number of new classrooms constructed and put into operation in the districts under the jurisdiction of the county superintendent.
7. Number of kindergarten programs added.
8. Number of school districts eliminated through school district reorganization.

It is the local administrative units that are directly responsible for action leading to such specific educational improvements, but the county superintendent does have a large measure of responsibility for overall educational leadership in the county. In evaluating his work, he needs to look beyond what he is doing for tangible evidence of progress. Effective effort should bear fruit in the form of desired accomplishments.

TABLE 13. Channels Through Which Leadership of the County Superintendent's Office Has Been Asserted

1. Have organized and conducted one or more workshops for teachers.	Yes.....No.....
2. Held countywide institute at the opening of school for orientation purposes.	Yes.....No.....
3. Have organized and conducted series of meetings in which parents and teachers together do educational planning.	Yes.....No.....
4. Have one or more study groups organized in which parents are studying child growth and development.	Yes.....No.....
5. Have lay advisory groups which advise the superintendent and board of education on such matters as establishing bus routes, planning new school buildings, selecting school sites, fixing the opening and closing hours of school.	Yes.....No.....
6. Have the schools of the county divided into zones for the purpose of supervisory group meetings of teachers at regular intervals.	Yes.....No.....
7. Maintain a county professional library for teachers.	Yes.....No.....
8. Have a circulating library of supplementary readers.	Yes.....No.....
9. Maintain a curriculum service center, in conjunction with the county superintendent's office, which serves as a workshop for teachers.	Yes.....No.....
10. Office hours on Saturday morning used primarily in conferences with teachers, board members, and parents.	Yes.....No.....
11. Publish an annual report which describes various phases of the educational program in addition to the usual statistical information.	Yes.....No.....
12. A monthly bulletin is sent to teachers and board members which gives information concerning the operation of the school program and suggestions for improvements.	Yes.....No.....
13. Have a working arrangement with other units of government or organizations in the county in developing such aspects of the school program as driver training, safety, soil conservation, fire prevention, and dental care.	Yes.....No.....
14. County superintendent, principals, and teachers of the county have coöperatively assumed responsibility for contributing a column regularly in the local newspaper.	Yes.....No.....
15. County superintendent and members of his staff have participated in one or more radio broadcasts during the year.	Yes.....No.....
16. Conduct a general conference of all board members in the county at least once during the year.	Yes.....No.....
17. Have planned a visit for board members to schools in a neighboring county or neighboring state to study various elements of the educational program.	Yes.....No.....

TABLE 13 (Continued)

-
18. Have arranged observation visits for teachers to schools in neighboring districts, counties, or states. Yes.....No.....
19. Attendance at meetings of local boards of education:
- a. Attend all meetings.....
 - b. Attend more than half of all local board meetings.....
 - c. Attend local board meetings only on occasions when special problems are under consideration.....
 - d. Have not attended any meetings of local boards during the past year.....
20. Have an association of local school principals or superintendents which meets regularly. Yes.....No.....
21. Have served as a member of or actively participated in the following organized community groups:
- a. County Health Committee.....
 - b. County Agriculture Committee.....
 - c. Soil Conservation District Committee.....
 - d. County Citizenship Committee.....
 - e. Schoolmasters' Club.....
 - f. County Fair Association.....
 - g. County Historical Society.....
 - h. County Safety Committee.....
 - i. County Recreation Committee.....
 - j. County Library Committee.....
 - k. County Child Welfare Association.....
 - l. Chamber of Commerce.....
 - m. County School District Reorganization Committee.....
 - n. County or Community Planning Association.....
-

IMPACT OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM ON COMMUNITY LIFE

The most important source of information for evaluating the professional leadership of the county superintendent is life in the communities and neighborhoods. Far too often, evaluation takes into account only organization, methods of operation, and skill in performance instead of significant changes in people, institutions, and patterns of association. Many county superintendents might profit from observing the methods of general appraisal used by people in other county leadership positions.

TANGIBLE EVIDENCE

In the increasing family of organizations, agencies, and institutions that serve the life of rural communities, county and state leaders are

more commonly trying to evaluate their work in terms of tangible accomplishments. The road engineer points to improvements in the flow of traffic and ease of travel, and to special hazards that have been eliminated. It is common to see mechanical traffic counters placed along roadways to gather essential information. The fire department calls attention to reductions in serious losses and insurance rates that have resulted from its services. The health department reports improvements in water supplies and sewage disposal, and calls attention to decreases in the frequency of communicable diseases and to infant mortality rates, as indications of the importance and effectiveness of its services.

If these and other agencies and organizations appear at times to be receiving proportionately large shares of the state's and county's limited budget for public services, it may be attributed in part to the objectivity in their evaluation and reporting to the public. There are, of course, many exceptions to the generalization, but most people are discriminating when it comes to spending their money, either through a system of public taxation or by individual private purchases. They tend to buy the things that give them most satisfaction—that are most useful and most valuable. If they do not spend as much for education as they can well afford and should, it may be that its values have not been clearly understood.

EVALUATE IN TERMS OF PURPOSES

More than thirty years ago the well-known Commission for the Reorganization of Secondary Education, after long and careful study, set forth the general objectives of secondary education which have since come to be known as the *Cardinal Principles*. These are "(1) Health, (2) Command of fundamental processes, (3) Worthy home membership, (4) Vocation, (5) Citizenship, (6) Worthy use of leisure, (7) Ethical character."⁸

Since that time these principles have been accepted widely and

⁸ Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education*, a Report of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1918, Bulletin No. 35, p. 5.

have appeared in the objectives of most school systems. Tersely and concisely, they define and state what the schools propose to do for the pupils and for the communities they serve.

With these principles identified in the purposes of the school, it is reasonable to assume that citizens should expect, during periods of evaluation of a school or a school officer as important as the county superintendent, evidence that because of the educational program people are healthier; homes are better and family life is more stable; people get jobs better suited to their interests and capabilities, and work at them more effectively; citizens are better; government has improved and there is less corruption in social, business, and political life; leisure time is used to better advantage; and the behavior of people is more nearly in harmony with the highest moral standards expressed in our culture.

Magazine articles, newspaper accounts of citizens' investigations, and the informal discussion of laymen indicate that inquiries about the accomplishments of the school are in terms of its expectancies. More often than not, they are directed toward how well the products of the school can read, write, and spell, or recall some isolated historical facts. In some instances they deteriorate into questions about such trivia as isolated statements in textbooks and the surfacing of outdoor playgrounds. Can it be that the broad purposes of the school are not really understood by the public or that they are not as important as schoolmen have believed them to be? Or have teachers and administrators so long ignored the need for calling attention to the accomplishments of the school in terms of its avowed major purposes that evaluation has become narrow and grossly skewed in the direction of a single traditional aim? Whatever the cause may be, many school people find themselves on the defensive at a critical time in the history of educational development when they ought to be on the offensive. Almost with their backs to the wall, they are called upon to justify and defend, on the basis of observations and measurements made in relation to but one of its aspects, a broad educational program that has been developed in terms of the all-important game of *life in a democracy*.

EVALUATIVE METHODS LAG BEHIND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Evaluation and accounting to the public have not kept up with improvements in curriculum content and instructional method, nor have they been kept in adjustment with the stated purposes of the school. But little effort has been made to assess objectively and fairly the school's contribution to the physical and mental health of people, to their vocational competencies, to their social behavior, to their role as citizens, and to their participation in home and family life; yet there are few seriously thinking people who would contend that these are not among its most important purposes. Teachers cannot be but frustrated if the stated purposes of their schools direct them to emphasize individual initiative, critical analysis, discriminating judgment, physical well-being, and social competencies in their instructional programs, and their efforts toward such ends go by without notice or are labeled with a negative value when appraisals are made and judgments formed on their work. It is only human that they direct their efforts toward the ends that are recognized in the final evaluation.

No more important contribution toward developing a functional educational program can be made by a county superintendent than to help people—pupils, teachers, parents, and other interested citizens—evaluate their schools in terms of what they are expected to do.

WHAT RURAL PEOPLE EXPECT FROM THE
COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT

Rural people's expectancy of their county superintendent goes above and beyond the performance of commonly recognized official functions. It is taken for granted that he will assist with the preparation and management of school budgets, give aid in selecting school sites, and advise them on difficult problems concerning the education of their children. It is a matter of common assumption that he will be skillful and tactful in working with teachers, a courageous and capable spokesman for education in public places, and a trusted counsel for a host of professional problems related to the organization and operation of public schools.

But these are matters of performance and rural people are not es-

entially interested in performance, in and of itself. They are interested in good schools—schools that will give their children maximum opportunity for physical, mental, and social development; schools that will strengthen their institutions, make their farms better, and their business places more productive; schools that will improve their communities; and schools that will contribute to human enlightenment and progress. The county superintendent who is worthy of the respect and confidence of the people he serves is inevitably identified with the schools for which he provides leadership—as the people see the schools, understand the schools, and believe in the schools. Their true expectancy of their county superintendent can be no less than their expectancy of the schools. It is in terms of what people expect of their county superintendent that his work should be evaluated.

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Chapter XXVIII gives emphasis to an approach to evaluation that takes the spotlight off the individual as the entire teaching-learning situation is appraised. Evaluation becomes a group process as staff members reach common agreement and understanding of the criteria against which the quality of performance is checked, and relate them to the purposes and philosophy of the school.

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The evaluation of educational leadership in relationship to the community in which it serves is treated in Part IV of this work-conference report. Basic principles of evaluation are identified and illustrative examples of methods used in appraising leadership competencies are cited.

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